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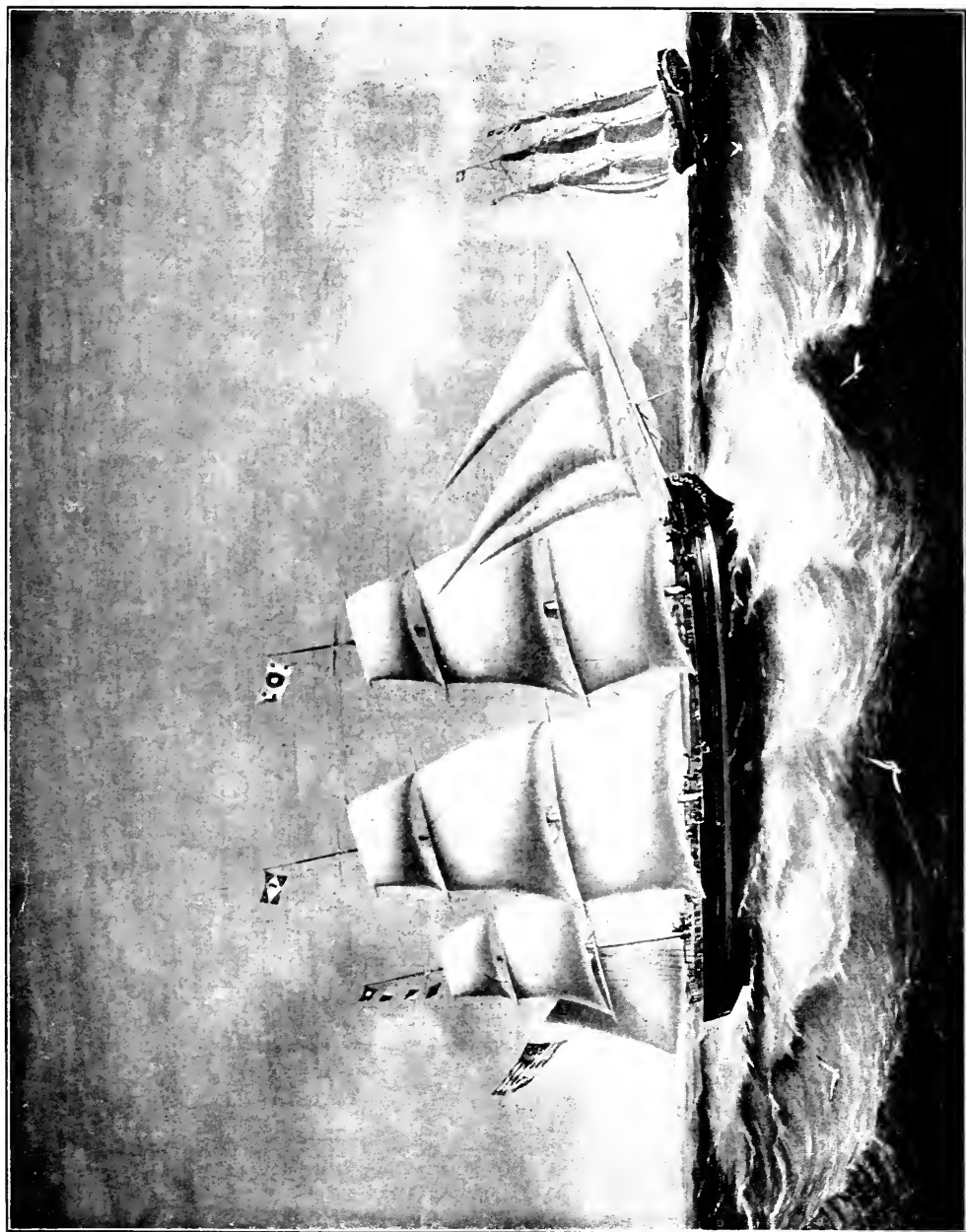
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SHIP "COLUMBIANA"

From an oil painting in the possession of Charles H. Taylor, Jr



THE  
BOSTONIAN  
SOCIETY  
PUBLICATIONS.

VOL. II  
SECOND SERIES



BOSTON  
OLD STATE HOUSE

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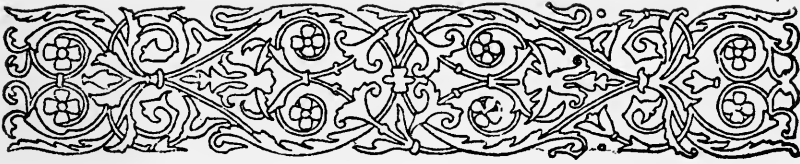
STORMS AND SHIPWRECKS IN BOSTON  
BAY

AND THE RECORD OF  
THE LIFE SAVERS OF HULL

BY

FITZ-HENRY SMITH, Jr.

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BOSTON, MASS.



# STORMS AND SHIPWRECKS IN BOSTON BAY

## AND THE RECORD OF THE LIFE SAVERS OF HULL

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A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL CHAMBER  
OLD STATE HOUSE, DECEMBER 19, 1916, WITH ADDITIONS, BY

FITZ-HENRY SMITH, Jr.,

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WHEN he arrives in President Roads, in Boston harbor, the ship master finds himself in an ample anchorage basin, well protected on all sides by islands and headlands. But the very presence of these islands and headlands, and the character of some of them at the harbor's entrance, makes the approach to Boston from the sea both difficult and dangerous. Point Allerton with Harding's Ledge, Toddy Rocks off Telegraph Hill, and The Brewsters with Shag

Rocks and The Graves jutting eastward and the great sand bar running inland, are menaces to the ship in the outer waters of the bay.

In 1715 the General Court of Massachusetts Bay voted to build a lighthouse on the Little Brewster, and a reason given was that the lack of such a structure had been "a great Discouragement to Navigation by the loss of the lives and Estates of Several of His Majesties Subjects," and upon the completion\* of the new lighthouse on The Graves there was published in the *Boston Globe* of September 1, 1905, a poem by Henry J. Clark, which is worth quoting.

TO "THE GRAVES."

Out from the Ocean's tumultuous breast  
Long, long hast thou lifted thy black jagged crest;  
Long hast thou ruled, a cruel despot, the waves  
At Boston's fair entrance, Thou menacing Graves.  
  
Fierce rage the waters, but fiercer their shock  
When shattered to spray on thy breastworks of rock;  
Loud shrieks the wind, but more wildly it raves  
When torn by their summits, Thou merciless Graves.  
  
Now thou art conquered, thy terrors are gone;  
Grim death is displaced, and life sits on thy throne:  
Secure on thy rock the light shines that saves  
And guides to the haven, Thou welcoming Graves.

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\* Superstition was thrown overboard when the lighthouses were first used, for both went into commission on Friday — Boston Light on Friday, Sept. 14, 1716, and The Graves Light on Friday, Sept. 1, 1905.



There may be an impression that The Graves were so called because of many lives lost there, that does not appear to have been the fact. The name is found on a chart as early as 1687, and it has been thought that the ledges were named after Admiral Thomas Graves,\* who, in 1643, commanded the "Tryal," the first Boston ship, and comparatively few vessels seem to have been wrecked on them.

Unfortunately, lighthouses and like devices are merely aids to navigation. They cannot prevent storms or eliminate marine disasters, and shipwrecks have occurred in and about the harbor notwithstanding the precautions of the government. Indeed, it would almost appear that the risk of ocean travel has kept pace with the improvement in the instrumentalities of navigation. It was very recently that the government undertook to dig the channel in Broad Sound which made The Graves Light a necessity. Until that work was done—for more than two centuries in fact—the main entrance to Boston Harbor lay between Point Allerton and The Brewsters, which serves to show why the town of Hull, with the long stretch of Nantasket Beach, and the bight of Stony Beach, connecting Point Allerton with the village and swept by northeast storms,

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\* Shurtleff, *Topographical History of Boston*, 3rd Ed., Preface, p. xxxiii. See Bostonian Society Publications, Vol. 2, p. 15, for a note on Adm. Graves.

should come to play so important a part in the life saving operations in Boston Bay.

What disasters the General Court had in mind when they voted to build the first Boston Light does not appear, but we know that less than a year previously, to be precise, on November 12, 1714, His Majesty's Sloop "Hazard" was wrecked on Cohasset Rocks,\* probably near where Minot's Light now stands. Petitions in the State archives for the remission of duties show the loss of other vessels before that time,† and doubtless they were not the only ones.

The dangers at the harbor's entrance were, however, early evident to mariners, as Winthrop makes known to us. Thus, in 1631, the Bark "Warwick" coming into

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\* *Sewall's Diary*, Vol. 3, p. 33, note (Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. 5th Ser., Vol. 7).

Queen Anne died on the 1st of August, 1724, and the "Hazard" was bringing to Boston a message from the new monarch, George I. The message seems to have been saved, for the Council Records of December 10th recite that "The Proclamation of His most excellent Majy King George expressed by His Majesty's Sloop the Hazard drawn up especially for this Province was solemnly read, & published by the High Sheriffs of the County, followed with loud acclamations of God save King George & expressions of joy." Council Records, Vol. 6, p. 283.

† Sept. 28, 1697, the Ship "Providence," Michael Gill, master, was returning from Barbadoes on her first voyage when she was wrecked on Harding's Ledge and most of her cargo lost. Mass. Archives, Vol. 62, p. 215.

On Jan. 31, 1702, the Brigantine "Mary" with logwood from the Bay of Campeachy, was wrecked "upon the rocks lying before Marble head." *Ibid.*, p. 399.

Nantasket Roads with a southeast wind barely escaped being driven on the rocks by a sudden gust,\* and in 1636, the "Charity" of Dartmouth, of 120 tons, laden with provisions, bound in with a strong northeast wind, was nearly lost between Point Allerton and Telegraph Hill. Says the governor,† "but the Lord, in his mercy to his people delivered her, after she had struck twice, and upon the ebb." The provisions were bought at a figure which saved the country £200, and were delivered to the towns that needed them.

It is only by diligent search that the details of the early disasters about Boston harbor can be found. In fact, no United States law authorized the collecting and compilation of wreck statistics previous to 1874. Some twenty-five years ago, Mr. Sidney Perley‡ industriously gathered together the data relating to the great storms of New England, but he did not devote himself

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And on Nov. 3, 1703, the Ship "John" of Exon, with salt and wine from Lisbon and Fyall, after apparently reaching Nantasket Roads in safety, was "by reason of the high Swelling of the Sea after a violent Storm" cast upon the rocks lying off Pemberton's (now George's) Island, where she filled and destroyed most of her cargo. *Ibid.*, p. 448.

\* *History of New England*, by John Winthrop (Savage's Ed., 1825), Vol. 1, p. 72.

Five years later the vessel was not so lucky and was wrecked, just where, is not apparent, but she seems to have ended her days in Dorchester Bay. A warrant was issued "to the constable of Dorchester to inventory and appraise" her. Winthrop, Vol. 2, p. 345. And the name "Barque Warwick Cove" or Creek appears on maps of the present day to mark the inlet to the Neponset River south of Commercial Point and crossed by the bridge of the latter name, though

entirely to shipwrecks, and the great marine disasters have not always taken place in the great gales. As will appear later, snow storms have been a most common cause of the wrecks upon our coasts.

The first gale of importance of which there is a record was the "Great Storm," so called, of August, 1635, when the wind, having blown from the south and southwest for a week, changed suddenly to the northeast with rain and great violence, blowing down trees and houses, and causing vessels to drag their anchors. The "Great Hope" of Ipswich, a ship of 400 tons, was driven ashore at Hoffe's Point, and then when the wind changed to the northwest was blown off again and ran ashore near Charlestown. The change of the wind to the northwest was accompanied with the very curious phenomenon that the tide seemed to come in twice in the

bridge and inlet sometimes appear as "Tenean Bridge" and "Tenean Creek."

That portion of what is now Freeport Street, extending from Union Street to the bridge, appears on a "Plan of Land belonging to the Commercial Point Association, Dorchester, Sept. 30, 1835, Thomas M. Moseley, Surveyor," (scale reduced by Alex. Wadsworth, Surveyor, July 1, 1848), as "Barque Warwick Street." The street was so known before that time, its name being changed to Commercial Street, Mar. 11, 1840, and again changed to Freeport Street Mar. 1, 1892.

For reference to the above plan, which may be found in the office of the Engineers of the Street Commissioners of the City of Boston, I am indebted to Mr. John H. Edmonds. And see the article on *The Barque Warwick* in 21 *N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg.* 223.

† Winthrop, *History of New England*, Vol. 1, p. 185.

‡ *Historic Storms of New England*, by Sidney Perley, Salem, 1891.

space of twelve hours, for after it had fallen about three feet, it began to flow again for an hour, and rose two or three feet, which Winthrop\* says "was conceived to be that the sea was grown so high abroad with the north-east wind that meeting with the ebb it forced it back again." Gov. Bradford wrote† that none living "either English or Indeans" ever saw so mighty a storm — "Being like (for ye time it continued) to those Hauricanes and Tuffons that writers make mention of in ye Indeas." And he ventured the statement that "the signs and marks of it will remaine this 100 years in these parts where it was sorest." Two nights later there was an eclipse of the moon.

The tide was of unusual height. Bradford says that south of Plymouth, which seems to have been the center of the gale, the wind caused the sea "to swell about 20 foote, right up & downe and many of the Indeans to clime into trees for their saftie." The normal rise of the tide at Boston is about ten feet, and if anything like a twenty foot tide occurred in the harbor it established a record, but we should not be warranted in making that assumption from what the worthy governor says took place on the cape. Not for many years can we refer to the record of a tide as authentic.

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\* *History of New England*, Vol. 1, p. 164.

† *History of Plimoth Plantation*, by William Bradford, Boston, 1898, pp. 401, 402.

The presence of an extraordinarily high tide was characteristic of the storms of the 18th century. The tide which accompanied the storm of February 24, 1723, has been estimated as sixteen feet, a figure not approached for more than one hundred and twenty-five years, and which seems never to have been exceeded. The storm was so severe that it was feared it had damaged the light house. Perley relates that the tide was twenty inches higher than had been known before, and that it rose above the tops of the wharves and flowed up the streets of Boston until, according to the *News Letter*, the inundation "looked very dreadful."\*

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\* *Historic Storms of New England*, p. 41.

The estimate of 16 feet for the tide of Feb. 24, 1723, is made by Mr. John H. Edmonds in Boston City Document No. 26. *Report of the Public Works Department for 1913*, p. 126.

There were other unusual tides in the 18th century and in the first half of the last century, notably on Oct. 20, 1770, Dec. 4 and 8, 1786, Mar. 26, 1830, and Sept. 26, 1847. The elevation of tides in Boston harbor is now determined by reference to gauges or marks figured from a definite base, but that was not always the situation, and the difficulty in making an accurate comparison between the old and modern tides is illustrated by some of the data collected by Mr. Perley.

Thus he remarks of the tide of 1723 that at Dorchester, Mass., it was "only excelled by that of April, 1852" (? 1851). *Historic Storms*, p. 41. Speaking of the tide of 1770, he states that it came to "within a foot" of the tide of 1723. *Ibid.*, p. 86. And in respect of the tide of 1830 he says that it "rose at Boston one and one-half inches higher than in the great tide of December, 1786, which was ten inches higher than the highest that any person then living remembered." *Ibid.*, p. 251. Surely there must have been some living in 1786 who remembered the great storm and tide of 1770. Query, was the tide of 1786 higher than that of 1770? And what can we determine from the quotations about the height of the tide of 1723?

October 21, 1743, there was a total eclipse of the moon, followed by a terrible rain storm and high tide, which Deacon Tudor says did the greatest damage in Boston "that ever was known in the Memory of Man," and he mentions two tides in 1764, one in April and one in December, which did much harm to wharves and cellars, though not so high as the great tide of 1723. In March of 1765, there was a northeast storm which kicked up the biggest sea in the harbor that the oldest men of the town ever saw, and with the high tide did damage estimated as at least £10,000.

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*Deacon Tudor's Diary* so far as it goes is far more satisfactory, for he seems to have referred back in each case to the tide of 1723. We find him writing of the storm of Apr. 20, 1764, that it "brote in the Tide higher than it's been for 40 Year" (p. 16); of the storm of Dec. 26, 1764, that it "Rais'd the Tide hier than it has been for 43 Years before" (p. 17), and that in 1770 the tide rose "to a greater height than has been known for 50 Years (which I well remember was on the Sabbath day tho' I was then but aboute Eleven Years old)" (p. 35). Feb. 24, 1723, was a Sunday.

The memory of the "oldest inhabitants" is not always to be trusted in such matters. A further difficulty is that the same tide does not register the same elevation at all points of observation. The averages sometimes vary, as will be noticed below, and we cannot be certain of comparative estimates.

The next record tide was that of Apr. 16, 1851, in the storm which destroyed the first Minot's Light, the highest reading showing 15.74 feet and the average of observations in Boston harbor 15.62 feet Boston City Base. This was followed by the tide in the snow storm of Dec. 26, 1909, figured on elevations determined by Mr. Edmonds as averaging 15.64 feet (*Report of the Public Works Department, supra*, pp. 126 and 127), but which has elsewhere been said to have averaged but "slightly over" 15.60 feet in Boston harbor as against 15.62 for the Minot's Light tide, all estimated on Boston City Base so called. (See

October 20, 1770, occurred one of the most violent and destructive storms of wind and rain that had taken place on the coast of New England.† More than a hundred vessels were wrecked and a hundred lives lost. Only one ship successfully rode out the gale in Nantasket Roads. The tide is said to have risen within a foot of the tide of 1723. Wharves were again overflowed and streets and cellars flooded, and Tudor figured the damages to the Province of Massachusetts Bay alone as £100,000.‡

In December, 1786, occurred two violent snow storms with very high tides. In the first, which began on Monday, the 4th, the British Brig "Lucretia" was wrecked on Point Shirley, where several of her crew who succeeded in getting ashore were lost in the snow, and the second, which followed on Friday, the 8th, a coasting schooner was driven on Lovells Island with the loss of all on board.

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Mass. Public Document No. 94. *Report of the Directors of the Port of Boston for 1914*, pp. 161 and 162, where the figures are given upon a base approximately .5 feet above Boston City Base). The Navy Yard records give the height of the 1909 tide there as 15.58 feet Boston City Base.

The question of the height of the 1909 tide was involved in a recent case before the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth, *Hecht v. Boston Wharf Co.*, 220 Mass. 397, where the Court (Rugg, C. J.) says at page 404:

"This tide was described by witnesses as extraordinarily high. The height reached by it was fifteen and six-tenths feet above the arbitrary level in common use in the neighborhood, known as Boston base, which



That was not the only catastrophe which Lovells has witnessed. The winter of 1645 was very cold, ships were dragged from their moorings by the ice, and a ketch was carried out to sea and wrecked on the island. § In January, 1767, Susanna Haswell, then an infant in arms, but afterwards as Mrs. Susanna Rowson, a distinguished actress, author and school teacher, was coming to join her father at Hull, when the brig on which she sailed from England was wrecked on Lovells Island in a blinding snow storm. By good fortune the vessel held together, and the next morning, when the tide had fallen, all on board were safely landed by means of a ladder placed against the wreck, except little Miss Haswell, who was lowered over the side with

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was about sixty-four one hundredths of a foot below mean low tide. This height had been exceeded slightly by the tide of 1851 which destroyed Minot's Ledge Light House. There were also tides higher than fifteen feet in 1830 and in 1847, and on seventeen other occasions from 1850 to 1905 the tide had risen to fourteen feet or more. The tide in question was three and eighty-six one hundredths feet above its predicted height. This was attributed to an accompanying severe storm, low barometer and a northeast wind of great velocity." . . . "A severe storm, known as the Portland storm because a steamer of that name then was lost, occurred in 1898. Its accompanying tide arose to a height of fourteen and ninety-four one hundredths feet."

Therefore, so far as the question of the comparative heights of the tides of 1851 and 1909 is capable of judicial determination, it seems to be settled in favor of the Minot's Light tide. But for all practical purposes the tides may be said to have been of equal extent.

† *Historic Storms*, pp. 86-91.

‡ *Deacon Tudor's Diary*, Boston, 1896, pp. 3, 16, 17, 35.

§ Winthrop, *History of New England*, Vol. 2, p. 254.

a rope.\* In the early part of the last century a coaster was wrecked on that part of the island known as Ram's Head. It was an exceeding cold night in mid-winter, and although the passengers, some fifteen in number, succeeded in reaching the shore, all froze to death before morning.†

There are also stories of wrecks near Boston Light. In 1727, John Hayes, the keeper, addressed the General Court about the damages which the lighthouse boat had suffered in his effort to help a sloop from North Carolina, which went ashore in a storm "upon the Spit of Sand off the Lighthouse,"‡ and in the southeast gale of December 4, 1768, a Boston brigantine, Thomas Morton, master, was driven on the rocks near the lighthouse island, where she went to pieces.§ The people on board were saved with difficulty. In the next century there were notable wrecks and rescues in the same locality, as will be referred to.

In the storms of the 19th century we hear more of the violence of the wind than of great tides, though the latter were present, as is usually the case with severe

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\* See the *Memoir of Mrs. Susanna Rowson* by Elias Nason, Albany, 1870, pp. 7-9, and the paper by Oscar Fay Adams in *The Christian Register* for Mar. 27 and Apr. 3, 1913, entitled *Susanna Haswell Rowson*. Cf. also Mrs. Rowson's novel *Rebecca*, wherein the voyage is described.

† Stark, *Illustrated History of Boston Harbor*, Boston, 1879, p. 80.

‡ Mass. Archives Documents, Vol. 63, pp. 461-463.

§ *Historic Storms*, p. 72.

easterly winds of long duration. The great gale of September, 1815, will at once come to mind, but it was preceded in October, 1804, with a storm of rain and snow, thunder and lightning, which tore the roof from the tower of King's Chapel and blew down the steeple of the North Church, besides damaging vessels lying at the wharves in Boston.\*

The gale of 1815 blew down houses and trees indiscriminately. At the entrance of the harbor the wind tore a path through the little village of Hull and completely destroyed the old church, which it is said had stood there since 1733. The damage to wharves and shipping was enormous and the loss of life considerable. Perley says that the newspapers declared they did not have space to record the marine disasters, and that the storm caused greater and more general havoc than any since the settlement of the country.† Readers of Holmes will recall that it was this storm which caused the good doctor, writing in a lighter vein, to bewail the loss of his Sunday breeches,

"It chanced to be our washing day  
And all our things were drying."

Fifty-four years later occurred another September gale, which did almost as much damage.‡

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\* *Historic Storms*, pp. 168 *et seq.*

† *Ibid.*, pp. 187 *et seq.*

‡ Sept. 8, 1869, *Ibid.*, pp. 329 *et seq.* Cf. Shurtleff, *Topographical History of Boston*, p. 324.

In December of 1839 there was a series of storms, which, so far as the shipping was concerned, was the most disastrous of any on this coast up to that time. The exact loss of life seems not to have been known, but it was large, for more than ninety vessels were lost, and nearly two hundred dismasted, driven ashore and otherwise injured.\* The storms occurred at intervals of about a week. The first commenced Saturday night, December 14th, at midnight, and raged until late the following Monday. Among the wrecks were the Schooner "Enterprise," cast high and dry near Worrick's Hotel, Cohasset, all on board being saved; the Schooner "Margaret," cast ashore north of the light-house, but not much damaged; the British Brig "Susanna" driven up to Quincy; the British Schooner "H. Davenport" cast ashore on Hospital (Rainsford) Island; and the Schooner "Katherine Nichols" wrecked at Nahant.

The second gale followed on Sunday and Monday, the 22nd and 23rd of December, and though less severe than the first, caused the wreck of the Schooner "Charlotte" at Nantasket, her crew being saved, and the wreck of the Bark "Lloyd" at the same place with loss

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\* The story of the storms is told in a twenty-four page pamphlet printed in Boston the following year, and entitled in part *Awful Calamities or the Shipwrecks of December, 1839, Being a Full Account of the Dreadful Hurricanes of December 15, 21 & 27, on the Coasts of Massachusetts.*

of life. The latter vessel went ashore about noon of the 23rd, and six of the crew who attempted to reach shore in the lifeboat were drowned. Another of the crew, named George Stott, succeeded in getting so near the shore in the small boat that he was saved by the inhabitants. Capt. Montford and the two remaining hands lashed themselves to the rigging, from which the seamen were soon swept overboard and the captain alone remained, to be finally brought ashore by the crew of the "Charlotte" who had themselves just suffered shipwreck. The captain was insensible when taken off and did not survive his experience.\*

The third gale began Friday morning, December 27th, and blew a hurricane until near sunrise of the 28th. The tide rose to a very great height and much damage was done on shore, though happily few lives were lost. The Ship "Columbiana" of over 600 tons was at Swett's wharf, Charlestown, partly loaded with ice, when she slipped her moorings, probably on account of the height of the tide, and was driven by the wind, bows on, against the old Charlestown bridge. She made a clean breach of the bridge and brought up against the wharf at the Warren bridge, completely

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\* In the interval between the storms the Schooner "H. Davenport" had been pulled off Hospital Island, but was driven on again by the second storm with such violence that it was doubted whether she could be floated a second time.

demolishing the drawtender's house, although the drawtender and his family, who were in bed at the time, escaped without injury. The ship was in charge of the mate, who, finding that the vessel was adrift, took the wheel and steered her, and she probably would have gone through the Warren bridge had he not luffed her in time. It is said that the destruction of property by the three storms must have been near a million dollars.

The decade from 1841 to 1851 was prolific of bad storms, which resulted in many disasters. The record of wrecks in 1841 is a long one, including the Schooner "Emeline" at Point Allerton, and the Sloop "Warsaw" at Cohasset, in the storm of April 30th; the "Maine" of Bath, at Scituate, and other vessels along the South Shore in the gale of October 3rd and 4th;\* the Brig "Constantia" at Scituate, November 20th, and the Ship "Mohawk" at Point Allerton, December 17th. December 30th, a year later, another vessel called the "Maine" was wrecked at Cohasset in a snow storm, and the year 1844 witnessed the wrecks of the Brig "Tremont" at Point Allerton on October 7th, and the Ship "Massasoit" at the same place on December 11th. October 7, 1849, the Brig "St. John" was wrecked on

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\* From papers found on board a small schooner ashore on Nantasket Beach near Whitehead, the vessel was thought to be the "Miller" of Essex, and of another wreck near by, supposed to be a fishing vessel, not enough of her was left "to judge who or what she was." *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 6, 1841.

Minot's Ledge, and the gale of April 16, 1851, one of the severest ever known here, is famous for the destruction of the first Minot's Light.

Some of the wrecks just mentioned will be referred to again, for we have now reached the period of the beginnings of an organized life saving service and of the many rescues which preparedness in that field has made possible. The credit for the initiative in the great work of saving life upon our coasts belongs not to the federal government,\* but to that most estimable local organization, the Humane Society of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, commonly known as the Massachusetts Humane Society.

The Humane Society was organized in 1786 and incorporated in 1791 "For the recovery of persons who meet with such accidents as to produce in them the appearance of death, and for promoting the cause of humanity by pursuing such means from time to time as shall have for their object the preservation of human life and the alleviation of its miseries." The rendering of aid to shipwrecked persons at once appealed to the organizers as an undertaking well worth the best efforts

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\* The U. S. Life Saving Service was not created by a single legislative act, but was the result of a series of enactments, dating back to 1848, which had in view the preservation of life and property from shipwreck on the coasts. In 1871 a definite life saving system was inaugurated and administered in conjunction with the Revenue Cutter Service until June 18, 1878, when Congress established the Life Saving Service as a separate organization.

of the society. Their contribution first took the form of huts of refuge stationed in exposed places. In January of 1787 a committee of the society asked the advice of a still older Massachusetts organization, the Boston Marine Society, as to where the huts would better be placed, having in mind to erect three of them, and the Marine Society replied that the most eligible places were Marshfield Beach, "the Beach back of Nantasket" and Lovell's Island. For a fourth hut they suggested Lynn Beach.\* Later the work of bringing shipwrecked crews ashore was taken up, and what was perhaps the first lifeboat of the kind in America was stationed by the Humane Society at Cohasset in 1807, where it remained until 1813.†

Little more seems to have been done at that time apparently for lack of funds, but the great purpose was not forgotten. The Society finally applied to the legislature, which in 1840 appropriated \$5000, and with that money the society built and stationed, each in a house to protect it, eleven lifeboats, one of which was at Nantasket Beach, and that boat up to the year 1845 was alone the means of saving thirty-six lives.‡ Fur-

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\* *Gleanings from the Records of the Boston Marine Society*, by Nathaniel Spooner, Boston, 1879, p. 28.

† *History of the Humane Society of Massachusetts*, Boston, 1845 (New Ed. 1876), p. 18 and cf. the Report of the Society for 1899-1900, p. 30, where some of the History is reprinted.

‡ *History of the Society*, Ed. 1845, p. 23, Ed. 1876, p. 25, Report of the Society, 1899-1900, p. 36.



ther appropriations were made from time to time by the Commonwealth and also by the federal government\* until a work was well launched which has since been maintained to the honor of all concerned.

The manning of the lifeboats was left to volunteers. The Society has been accustomed to grant awards for services so rendered, usually cash, with a medal, bronze, silver or gold, and sometimes a certificate, for exceptional cases. A record of the awards has been kept, and the names of the men of Hull who have thus been recognized may be found in the list printed in the Reports of the Society. It is the best brief of what they have done. Concerned with the most serious sort of labor, the list is, at the same time, not without humor, as may be seen from the award made to three men in 1910 in language as follows: "Who manned dory at Hull and went to assistance of two men in rowboat, who jumped overboard before dory reached them and swam ashore. The rowboat was saved."

Hull names first appear in 1844, when Moses B. Tower was given a gold medal and ten dollars, and John W. Tower and William James and five others of the society's lifeboat at Hull — whose names are not given — each received ten dollars. What the awards were for the list does not state, but it appears from the His-

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\* See *History of the Society*, Ed. 1876, appendix, p. 99.

tory of the Society\* that they were given for heroic exertions in saving the officers and crew of the Brig "Tremont" of New York. The brig was driven ashore in the storm of October 7th and struck on Point Allerton at low water, where she was in imminent danger of being broken to pieces. She was discovered there by Mr. Moses B. Tower, who with the help of two men (apparently his son and Capt. James) and his own horses succeeded in conveying the lifeboat a distance of a mile and a half to a place suitable for launching it. On the way he picked up the five other men, and after a row of something more than a mile they reached the wreck and there found the captain and crew, where they had been for more than seven hours, exhausted and in the greatest peril, and brought all safely to shore.

Speaking of the rescue, the *Boston Daily Advertiser* and *Patriot* of October 14, 1844, says: "This is the third instance in which this boat stationed at Hull has been the means of preserving life. The first was that of the crew of the 'Emeline,' from which five men were saved; the second, that of the 'Mohawk,' when twelve were saved; and thirdly, this of the 'Tremont,' as just related [eight saved]. Had the Legislature of Massachusetts made provision only for this single boat, such results would alone have sufficiently attested the wisdom and humanity of the appropriation."

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\* Ed. 1845, pp. 59 and 78, Ed. 1876, p. 75.

The "Emeline" was a schooner wrecked at Point Allerton April 30, 1841, as previously mentioned.\* The "Mohawk" was a ship of about 350 tons, built on the Kennebec in 1832 and valued at \$21,000. She entered Massachusetts Bay Thursday afternoon, December 16, 1841, with fine weather, when it came on thick with an easterly wind which changed to the northeast and began to blow hard. She tacked back and forth across the bay until Friday afternoon, when having blown away all her sails and made breakers ahead, she let go both anchors. Sometime thereafter she began to drift and an attempt was made to cut the chains. This being unsuccessful her masts were cut away in the hope that she would bring up again, but she continued to drag until she struck on Point Allerton bar. The lifeboat was damaged in an attempt to get to the ship and save the crew, but later all were safely landed in a small boat which was put out from the shore.†

Moses B. Tower, who led in the rescue of the crew of the "Tremont," was the keeper of the hotel in Hull, situated near the east end of the village and sometimes since known as the "Nantasket House." William

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\* *Supra*, p. 24.

† *Boston Daily Advertiser and Patriot*, Dec. 18 and 20, 1841.

Unfortunately we do not know the names of the men who made the rescue. The *History of the Humane Society* (Ed. 1845, p. 77), says that the lifeboat "was driven on the rocks and badly stove" in the attempt to reach the wreck.

James, who assisted in the rescue, was a Dutchman, the original spelling of his name being Jaames. Born at Dokkum, he came to America early in the last century, settled in Hull and married there in 1808 Esther Dill, a daughter of one of the old families of the place, and their descendants have made the name of James famous in the life saving annals of the country.\*

In 1845 nine members of the volunteer crew of the same lifeboat received ten dollars each, and seven members received fifteen dollars each, for two attempts, the first unsuccessful, and the other successful in rescuing Capt. Berry and eleven members of the Ship "Massasoit" wrecked December 11th, the year previous.† The "Massasoit" was an Indiaman from Calcutta, and like the "Emeline" the "Mohawk" and the "Tremont" was lost at Point Allerton, where she struck late in the evening. The sea broke entirely over her during the night, and the next morning, when the position of the vessel was discovered, the waves were running so high that the lifeboat which attempted to go out to her was filled with water six times. Later, by watching for a favorable moment to approach the wreck, and by using the most strenuous efforts, the volunteers got near enough to take off all on board except a passenger, Mr.

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\* William James died at Hull, Jan. 11, 1866, aged 84 years. His wife was drowned at "Hull Gut," Apr. 3, 1837.

† *History of the Humane Society*, Ed. 1845, p. 87, Ed. 1876, p. 75.

Stephen C. Holbrook of Roxbury, Mass., who fell in the main hatchway. As he did not reappear, they started back for the beach, when Mr. Holbrook was seen to creep upon the deck again. Two small boats manned by Boston pilots, who had been in the vicinity of the ship all the morning then endeavored to save him, but before they could reach him the ship split open and he was seen no more. The crew were nearly exhausted when taken off, and Capt. Berry was unable to speak for an hour after.\*

The publications of the Humane Society fail to tell us who put out to the wreck, but the names of the seven men who made up the crew on the second attempt when the rescue was effected are given in the *Boston Daily Advertiser* and *Patriot* of December 17 as John Mitchell, captain; Samuel Sawyer, John Thompson, Albertis James, Solomon Dill, Samuel March and John F. Cable. John Mitchell, like William James, was a foreigner, it is said a Dalmatian, who Anglacized his name to Mitchell, and coming to this country settled in Hull,† where his descendants have been prominent to the present day.

The numerous wrecks so close to their doors furnished the people of Hull with an opportunity for busi-

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\* *Boston Daily Advertiser* and *Patriot*, Dec. 13, 1844, where the names of the pilots are given as Wm. Phillips, Alfred Nash, Wm. Fowler and George Williams.

† Captain Mitchell died at Hull, Oct. 27, 1876, aged 98 years.

ness as well as for the saving of life, which some of them were not slow to grasp. In 1845 Mr. James Lloyd Homer wrote a series of letters from Hull, published in the *Boston Post*, which he subsequently printed, with notes, in a pamphlet entitled "Notes on the Sea Shore; or Random Sketches" by the "Shade of Alden" (Boston, 1848). His remarks on "Wrecks and Wreckers" give us a contemporaneous picture of the place and of some of its inhabitants not obtainable elsewhere, and of such interest, that they are quoted at length. He says\* :

"Hull is a great place for wreckers, and for wrecks. Mr. Tower, Mr. Mitchell, and some others, whose exertions have often been witnessed amidst the tempest and the storm on Nantasket beach and its vicinity, live in Hull. The former gentleman keeps the only hotel in the place; he is visited every summer by thousands of persons.

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"He is a 'prosperous gentleman' and keeps an excellent free-and-easy temperance house. Mr. Mitchell, a foreigner by birth, from small beginnings, has become quite a land holder here, and is said to be rich.

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"On the beach, near Mr. Tower's hotel, lie the wrecked hulls of two or three vessels and masts and

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\* Pp. 15 and 16.

spars innumerable. Some of the Hullonians are in the habit of buying wrecks, and then breaking them up — saving the iron, copper, and such other parts as are valuable, and using the wood for fuel. The wreck of the ill-fated *Massasoit*, and that of the brig *Tremont*, cast away last winter at Point Alderton, have been entirely broken up, and the materials are piled up mountain high before the house of Mr. Mitchell, who has enough of this kind of stuff to load a ship of three hundred tons. He is a wholesale dealer in wrecked vessels — in old masts, spars, rigging, iron, and brass. The wreck of the old brig *Favorite* lies upon the beach,\* as does that of the schooner *Emeline*, both of which vessels, heavily laden, were sunk, some three or four years since, off Nantasket beach, and afterwards raised by Mitchell and others, on shares, and towed into Hull bay. I think they must have lost money by these jobs. The hull of the *Favorite*, at low water, was formerly used as a shelter for horses, when the stable of Mr. Tower was full: it is now too deeply embedded in the sand for that purpose. There are numerous relics of the old ship *Mohawk*, which was wrecked off P. Alderton, with a valuable cargo, from Liverpool: her figure-head decorates one of Mitchell's buildings: her round-house he uses as a counting-room, and for other pur-

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\* We have not been able to locate the wreck of the "*Favorite*" referred to by Mr. Homer.

poses. I have been informed that, at one period, the inhabitants held their political and town meetings in this accidental fixture, but I have my doubts. At any rate, the school house, a diminutive ten-footer, is used for this purpose.

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“At the suggestion of Capt. Sturgis and Mr. Tower, the Humane Society have recently erected a new boat house on the north side of Stony beach, near Point Alderton, in which there is an elegant, substantial, copper-fastened life-boat, of extensive dimensions. I should think it capable of holding thirty or forty persons, besides her ‘gallant crew.’ She is calculated for eight oars. This boat was much wanted. There are now two excellent boats there, one of which is on the northeast side, besides ‘two humane houses,’ for the accommodation of shipwrecked seamen. The people of Hull are now better prepared to render assistance to wrecked vessels and their crews than they ever were before.”

In 1850 the French Brig “L’Essai” was wrecked on Nantasket Beach, near Strawberry Hill. Her crew were saved by a lifeboat of the Humane Society after an heroic effort, for which service the society conferred a bronze medal upon three of the volunteers, viz.: Joseph Cobb, Samuel James and Joshua James, all of Hull. The first named appears to have been the keeper







FIGUREHEAD OF THE "MARITANA."

In the Marine Museum, Boston, Mass., bearing the following legend :

Originally on a French vessel captured in the war of 1798; placed on the American Ship "Caroline" and saved when the vessel was wrecked on the coast of New England; placed on the Ship "Maritana," and again saved from the wreck of that vessel near Boston Light; then placed on a building at the head of Lincoln Wharf. (Photograph by courtesy of Joseph P. Loud.)

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of the Society's boats in Hull, a position which he occupied as late as 1869 and perhaps longer. Samuel James was a son of the William James who took part in the rescue of the crew of the "Tremont." Later in his life he was the designer of a successful lifeboat, and in 1861 he received a certificate of the Humane Society and ten dollars for rescuing twelve persons from the Ship "Maritana" wrecked near Boston Light.

The story of the "Maritana" is that of a notable wreck and rescue. The vessel was a fine ship of 991 tons, built at Quincy in 1857, owned in Providence, and commanded by Capt. G. W. Williams of Dedham. She was returning from Liverpool with an assorted cargo when, on Saturday night, November 2, 1861, there arose a heavy southeast gale, with driving rain. The tide arose to a great height, so that in Boston "the water came up nearly to the Custom House," and the wind was so severe that, the *Advertiser* says, "such articles as signs, spouts, awnings and chimneys were distributed about the city with considerable freedom." \* The "Maritana" came into the bay Sunday morning, running before the gale for Boston Light, when suddenly breakers were discovered directly ahead and the vessel struck almost immediately on Egg (or Shag) Rocks, lying just to the eastward of the lighthouse island. Soon after her masts were cut away and

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\* *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Nov. 4, 1861.

attempts were made to reach the shore, first by five sailors in a small boat ; but the effort was unsuccessful and they were hauled back to the ship. A seaman named Thomas Haney then fastened a life preserver to his body and undertook to get ashore with a line. Although he reached the rocks, the sea broke over them with such violence that he could not remain, and he was pulled back to the vessel more dead than alive. The gangway plank was next gotten out and several seamen attempted to get ashore as upon a raft, but as in the previous cases the surf prevented and they were drawn back, and a further attempt to take a line ashore, made this time by the second mate, James Donnough (or Dunagh), was also futile.

Not long after the vessel struck she showed signs of breaking up and the passengers and crew were ordered into the weather chains which nearly all were fortunate in reaching, when about half-past eight on Sunday morning the hull parted amidships and one half rolled into the sea carrying all who were upon it. Most of them were drowned, and Capt. Williams, who was standing on the quarter-deck at the time, fell between the parts and was crushed to death. From the remaining half of the ship seven persons floated to the rocks on the top of a house. Five others reached the rocks by swimming, and there the twelve clung, swept by the seas until Sunday afternoon, when Pilot Boat No. 2 —

the "Wm. Starkey" came to their rescue. A line was thrown to them and made fast. The other end was fastened to a boat which lay off, while a second boat ran near enough to the rocks for the men to jump aboard, and in that way all were safely removed; but eleven of the crew and thirteen passengers had perished.\* Says the *Boston Journal* of November 5, 1861, "A more complete wreck was never seen. Fragments of the ship and her freight strew all the lower islands, and occasionally a mangled body is thrown upon the jagged rocks. God save us all from a death like this."†

The man who accomplished the task of going back and forth in the small boat and rescuing the survivors was Capt. Samuel James of Hull. With him, according

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\* See *Boston Daily Advertiser* of Nov. 4, *Boston Daily Journal* of Nov. 4 and 5, and *Boston Evening Transcript* of Nov. 4, 1861. The *Journal* of Nov. 4, contains an interview with John Manning of Providence, "the carpenter of the ill-fated ship." Cf. the *Transcript* of the same date.

† The body of Capt. Williams was recovered, and his funeral, which took place at Dedham on Wednesday, the 6th, was attended by ten of the officers and crew of the ship. *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Nov. 8, 1861. Only two of the passengers were saved. *Evening Transcript*, Nov. 4.

In the same storm the Bark "Nathaniel Cogswell" was wrecked on Scituate Beach — all hands saved.

Mar. 9, 1860, witnessed the strange wreck of the Brig "Ewan Crerar" near the scene of the loss of the "Maritana." The brig struck in a thick snow storm near The Graves, but came off and anchored between Shag Rocks and the Outer Brewster, where she shortly sank in seven fathoms of water, the crew taking to the boats and landing at the lighthouse. *Advertiser*, Mar. 10, 1860.

to the *Boston Evening Transcript* of November 4, in an item headed "Heroism in Boston Bay" were H. S. Locke and George Kibble, and those two, together with R. S. Hunt and F. B. Wellock, each received ten dollars from the Humane Society for assisting in the rescue.\*

Joshua James, the third volunteer to receive a bronze medal for saving the crew of the Brig "L'Essai," was another son of William James, and destined to acquire a unique distinction, namely that of being the foremost life saver of his day and generation. At the time of that rescue (1850) he was only twenty-four years old; but while it is the first record we have of an award to him for services rendered, it was not the first time that he had put out to a ship in distress. Seven years later he received a certificate embellished with pictures of the members of his crew, for his "persevering efforts in rescuing the officers and crew of the Ship Delaware on Toddy Rocks" off Telegraph Hill, March 2, 1857.† The ship seems to have reached the harbor, when she dragged ashore near Stony Beach in a thick snow storm and lay in that dangerous place where some of the most

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\* *History of the Humane Society*, Ed. 1876, p. 82. Cf. the list of awards in the recent Reports of the Society for the correct spelling of the names. Capt. Samuel James died at Hull, Dec. 3, 1915, aged 91 years.

† *Joshua James* "Life Saver," by Sumner I. Kimball (Superintendent U. S. Life Saving Service) in the series "True American Types," American Unitarian Association, Boston, 1909, p. 36. The Reports of the Humane Society do not mention this award.

notable rescues by the life savers of Hull have been made.

The same storm caused the loss of the British Brig "Odessa" at Stony Beach and the Brig "Lorana" on Nantasket Beach,\* and the year 1857 was disastrous to shipping in other parts of Massachusetts Bay. January came in very cold. On Sunday, the 18th, there began a blustering snow storm which completely crippled the railroads and greatly interfered with travel in Boston. The harbor threatened to freeze, and vessels were employed to run up and down the channel to keep it open for the "America," whose arrival was daily expected. In the vicinity of Provincetown the storm was one of the worst ever experienced. There were twenty vessels at anchor in the harbor and all but three were dragged ashore by the ice. At Gloucester, ice formed in the inner harbor, and, when it started, carried away every vessel with which it came in contact, including the Ship "California," which was driven completely across the bay and cast ashore near the Brig "New Empire." The "New Empire" had struck on the outer rocks at Cohasset, but drifted over and brought up on Black Ledge.

In addition there were the wrecks of the Schooner

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\* *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Mar. 3 and 4. The "Delaware" hailed from Bath and was valued at \$25,000. The "Lorana" was a new vessel of 329 tons, built at Thomaston in 1856, owned in Boston and valued at \$12,000. *Advertiser*, Mar. 5 and 6.

"Geneva" at Scituate Beach, and of the Bark "Tedesco" at Swampscott with the loss of all on board, including the captain and his wife, a Spanish lady he had recently married. The vessel was bound from Cadiz with a cargo of sherry wine and salt, and was seen lying to between Egg Rock and Nahant all Sunday. When she struck she went entirely to pieces and the fragments with broken wine pipes were mixed up on the beach with masses of ice, in some places piled ten feet high.\*

The wrecks last mentioned did not take place within the field of operation of the life savers of Hull,† but following the "Delaware" there were other rescues on the South Shore, in all of which, save the first, Capt. Joshua James took part, and with the exception, perhaps, of the "Helene," as commander of the life saving crew, viz: in 1864, the Brig "Swordfish"; 1870, the Schooner "R. W. Genn"; 1873, the Schooner "Helene"; 1882, the Schooners "Bucephelus" and "Nettie Walker" (in a blinding snow storm); 1883, the Schooner "Sarah

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\* *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 21, 22 and 24, 1857.

The "New Empire" was a new vessel of 476 tons, built in 1854 and valued at about \$25,000. The "Tedesco" was built in 1847 and valued at \$15,000. The "California" was older, having been built at Medford in 1831. She was of 369 tons and owned in Gloucester. *Advertiser*, Jan. 21.

† The crews of the "California" and "New Empire" were saved by volunteers at Cohasset and Scituate, and there have been other splendid rescues by the life savers of those towns as the Reports of the Humane Society show.



Potter"; 1885, the Brig "Anita Owen" \*; and 1886, assisting the captain of the Schooner "Mollie Trim."

In 1872 there was a wreck at Point Allerton under conditions where the life savers were unable to assist, that of the Bark "Kadosh," in the memorable storm of December 26 of that year, which included in its toll the loss of the Ship "Peruvian" on Cape Cod with all on board. The weather had been exceedingly cold, when on the 26th, it began to snow and developed at night into a violent gale. The snow was of a dry consistency, and while there were but a few inches on a level the drifts and snow banks were large; the horse cars had to be discontinued in places, and the railroads were interfered with and the mails detained.

The "Kadosh" was a vessel of 655 tons, built at East Boston in 1864, and bound from Manila with a cargo of sugar, hemp and sandalwood, under the command of Captain Matthews of Barnstable, it being his first voyage as master of the vessel. Like the "Mohawk" thirty years previous, the "Kadosh" beat about in the bay until it came on thick, when she anchored and shortly afterward struck on Point Allerton and

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\* For an account of the rescue of the Brig "Anita Owen" as told by Capt. James, see his life by Sumner I. Kimball, p. 41. Mr. Kimball says (p. 36) that Capt. James went out to the "Swordfish," but the Reports of the Humane Society do not so state. The award made by the Society in 1860 to the captain and crew of the lifeboat at Nantasket does not tell who participated in the undertaking or name the vessel.

began to break up. The crew at once put off in two boats, and the one commanded by the mate reached shore in safety, but the captain's boat was capsized and all in it drowned.\* The bark was dashed to pieces and scattered along the shore,† and the following editorial from the *Boston Daily Advertiser* of December 28th, gives us an idea of the impression which the storm made at the time :

“Only those who have approached these shores from the sea in wintry weather and known how anxiously the mariner watches every indication of the sky and the weather-glass, can accurately apprehend the dreadful sense of danger always present. The national government has done much by erecting light-houses, furnishing life-saving stations and other securities to lessen the natural perils, but in the circumstances of the case these cannot be wholly avoided. In the gloom and wildness of such a storm as that of Thursday night all that human ingenuity can accomplish will avail little for protection against the tremendous forces of the elements. All chances are reduced to the unequal conditions of a struggle of half-frozen, quickly-exhausted men working on rolling, slippery decks, with ice-stiffened cordage and rent sails, amidst blinding clouds of snow,

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\* *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Dec. 27, 28 and 30, 1872.

† Her gun was secured and may be seen to-day in front of the library in the village of Hull.

against the fury of the north wind and the mighty assaults of the waves.

“Happy the ship that meets the storm in the open sea. There is no peril of the ocean so hopeless as the peril of the shore, and we may well imagine there is no death so hard for the voyager to meet as the death in sight of port. To the families of all who perished either by being washed off the breaking hull of the ‘Peruvian’ or by drowning in the last desperate effort to reach shore in a boat of the abandoned ‘Kadosh,’ or by whatever misfortune of that terrible bleak night, the cordial sympathy of the whole community is extended. Prayers for their consolation will ascend to heaven from hundreds of homes which have never known the anxiety of watching for returning ships, or the grief for those who go over the sea and never come back.”

Joshua James was appointed keeper of the Humane Society’s lifeboats at Hull in 1876 — comprising one boat at Stony Beach, one at Point Allerton and two on Nantasket Beach, and December 19th, 1885, the Society voted him its silver medal and fifty dollars in money “in recognition of his conspicuous bravery and ability during his connection with the society’s lifeboats from the year 1842, when he was only fifteen years of age,” — in the course of which service it was asserted

that he had assisted in saving over one hundred lives. As Capt. James was born on the 22nd of November, 1826, he reached his fifteenth year in 1841, which may mean that he took part in the rescue of the crew of the "Mohawk" on December 17th of that year. The occasion of his first service is, however, somewhat in doubt,\* but there were no conspicuous wrecks near the village of Hull in 1842, and the wreck of the "Emeline" on April 30th, 1841, was some months before he attained the age mentioned in the vote of the Society. The medal was inscribed : †

To  
CAPT. JOSHUA JAMES  
FOR BRAVE AND  
FAITHFUL SERVICE  
OF MORE THAN  
40 YEARS IN THE  
LIFEBOATS OF THE  
HUMANE SOCIETY  
1886.

Yet he was to perform still greater service, which brings us to the great gale and snow storm of November 25 and 26, 1888. The storm was particularly severe in the vicinity of Boston, and was the most destructive experienced here for many years. Many vessels were driven on the beaches from Nantasket to Scituate, and a large number of lives were lost.

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\* See *Joshua James*, by S. I. Kimball, p. 32.

† *Ibid.*, p. 49.



CAPTAIN JOSHUA JAMES  
Life Saver



On the afternoon of the 25th, Capt. James having observed that several vessels in Nantasket Roads were dragging their anchors, called a crew together and got his lifeboat ready for use. No sooner had he done this when a large schooner — the “Cox and Green” — stranded just west of Toddy Rocks and her crew were landed by means of the breeches buoy. Meanwhile, the Schooner “Gertrude Abbott,” another three-master and laden with coal, struck the rocks a little to the eastward and hoisted a signal of distress. She was so far off that she could not be reached with the beach apparatus, it was growing dark, the tide was high, and the storm was raging with increased fury. It was accordingly thought best to wait for low water before attempting to launch a boat. A fire was lighted on the bluff so that the vessel could be kept in view; but the tide fell slowly, owing to the violence of the gale, and between eight and nine o'clock at night the life savers decided not to wait longer but to attempt to put out to the schooner. They managed to launch a surfboat, and after a desperate pull, during which two of the crew were obliged to bail constantly to keep the boat from swamping, they got near enough to heave a line on the bow of the schooner. The eight sailors then swung themselves into the boat and a start was made for the beach. With the sea that was running and the boat's crowded condition the return was exceedingly hazardous. Not far from the

beach they struck a rock and nearly capsized, but were able to right the boat and to haul in one man who had fallen overboard; and although they struck a number of times again, they succeeded in maintaining headway to the shore, and finally landed all safe.

Says the Report of the United States Life Saving Service,\* from which this account of the rescue is taken, "This was a notable rescue and one that put to the test the noble qualities of every member of the boat's crew. Actuated by the highest motives, they set forth amidst untold peril and triumphed by their cool courage and determination of purpose. There are few examples of greater heroism."

It is said that when Capt. James warned his crew that the chances were that they would never return from an attempt to save the shipwrecked men every member offered himself without a moment's hesitation.†

During the remainder of the night a strict watch was maintained along the beach, in itself an arduous and perilous task, and about three o'clock in the morning the three-masted Schooner "Bertha F. Walker" was discovered ashore about half a mile northwest of the "Abbott." She also was beyond the reach of the shot line, and they had to go all the way to Strawberry Hill Station for a boat to take the place of the one that had been

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\* Annual Report for 1889, p. 62.

† *Joshua James*, by S. I. Kimball, pp. 55 and 56.



damaged in the rescue of the crew of the "Abbott." The new boat was recently built from designs by Capt. James' brother, Samuel, and had never been tested in actual rescue work. Nevertheless, it was brought to the scene of the wreck of the "Walker," launched, and after a hard struggle in which the boat proved itself, the wreck was reached and those who remained alive on board were brought safely to shore.\*

About that time a messenger arrived from Atlantic Hill, five miles distant, with the tidings that two vessels were ashore there. One was the Schooner "H. C. Higginson," which had struck the evening before. News of the fact had been conveyed to the keeper of the government life saving station at North Scituate, who, when he arrived, found volunteers of the Humane Society's boat at Crescent Beach already at work. Both succeeded in firing a life line aboard the schooner, but one was out of reach of the crew, and the other became so fouled with floating wreckage that it was impossible to free it. Capt. James then arrived with the large surfboat "Nantasket," and seeing the predicament he at once launched the boat and started for the wreck. The newcomers managed to get through the surf, but after battling for three-quarters of an hour with the furious sea, were driven ashore with two holes stove in

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\* *Joshua James*, by S. I. Kimball, p. 60.

their boat. Repairing the damage as best they could, they dragged the boat to another place, launched it again, and after a long and hard pull reached the vessel, where they were confronted with another predicament.

Of the five men who were alive on board, one was in the mizzen-top and four in the foretop. The schooner was lying with her stern to the beach. The lifeboat had come up to the stern and four of the men were at the other end of the vessel. They had been in the tops for fourteen hours and were in such condition that they could do little to help themselves. Something had to be done, however, and first the man in the mizzen rigging cautiously descended until he reached a position where he could catch a line thrown to him, which he tied around his body and then leaped overboard and was hauled into the lifeboat. By a great effort the boat was then forced forward to abreast of the mainmast, but that was as far as the crew could move her, and the remaining men were in the foretop. The only way for them to escape was by sliding down the hawser, which had been sent aboard for the breeches buoy and was trailing in the main rigging, and they all took the chance, each in turn. When they reached the main rigging a line was thrown to them and they were hauled aboard the lifeboat, and brought ashore in safety.\*

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\* *Joshua James*, by S. I. Kimball, pp. 65, *et seq.* U. S. Life Saving Service, Report for 1889, p. 62.

The other wreck was the Schooner "Mattie E. Eaton," but the sea had forced her so high upon the beach that the crew were able to get ashore at low tide without help. The Hull life savers thereupon started for home, and when they had gone about half way they came upon the Brigantine "Alice," which had parted her moorings at Gloucester and been driven across the bay. Capt. James went aboard with his crew and found her deserted. Soon after they were obliged to put out again and rescue two men who meanwhile had reached the vessel and had been left there when their boat was washed away.

As a result of the twenty-four hours' work the volunteers of Hull placed to their credit the saving of twenty-nine human lives. Capt. James was in command throughout the whole time, and four of his crew took part in all the trips out of a total of twenty men engaged.\* Says the government report,† "When it is considered that they imperiled their lives practically without hope of reward, influenced solely by the desire to succor their fellow-creatures, too much praise cannot be accorded them."

Under the authority of an Act of Congress the Secretary of the Treasury conferred upon Capt. James and the volunteers who took part in the rescue of the crew

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\* *Joshua James*, by S. I. Kimball, pp. 72, 73.

† U. S. Life Saving Service, Report for 1889, p. 63.

of the "Gertrude Abbott" each a gold medal, and upon those who did not participate in that rescue but who made up a part of the boat's crew that went to the "H. C. Higginson," silver medals were given. In addition, the Humane Society made awards for all of the rescues and gave Capt. James a gold medal and the other participants each a bronze medal. The volunteers who with Capt. James received medals from the federal government were, Osceola F. James, Alonzo L. Mitchell, H. Webster Mitchell, Ambrose B. Mitchell, John L. Mitchell, Eben T. Pope, George F. Pope, Joseph T. Galiano, Louis F. Galiano, Frederick Smith, each a gold medal, and Eugene Mitchell, Eugene Mitchell, Jr., William B. Mitchell, Alfred Galiano and George Augustus, each a silver medal, and they, with five others, received the bronze medal of the Humane Society.\*

The Galianos just mentioned were sons of Andrew Galiano, who was born at Rovigno in Istria, an Adriatic province of Austria-Hungary. Reaching this country about the middle of the last century he settled in Hull, and like his predecessors, William James and John Mitchell, became the ancestor of a family now prominent in the place. John Augustus, the first of the

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\* Cf. U. S. Life Saving Service, Report for 1896, p. 282, and List of Awards in Reports of the Humane Society. The "five others" who received a bronze medal were Francis T. James, Harrison Mitchell, Stephen Lowe, James Lowe and Reinier James, Jr.

family of that name to make Hull his home, is said to have come from Trieste.\*

The great loss of life and property occasioned by the storm of November, 1888, emphasized the need of additional government life saving stations about Boston, and led to the establishment of a station at Stony Beach early in the year 1889. When it came to the selection of a keeper, Capt. Joshua James was the first and only choice, notwithstanding that he was over sixty years of age at the time, and that the regulations of the service fixed the age limit for keepers at the time of their appointment at forty-five years. He easily met all physical requirements, however, and his record as a volunteer demanded this selection, but his is said to be the only instance in the history of the United States Life Saving Service where the regulation as to age limit has been waived. Capt. James took charge of the

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\* Andrew Galiano married at Boston, Mass., Dec. 26, 1855, the daughter of John Robinson, born at Oxford, England. He died at Hull, Feb. 6, 1910, in his 84th year.

John Augustus married at Hull, Aug. 30, 1840, Adaline W. Turner, the daughter of Elisha Turner of Scituate and Elizabeth Dill of Hull, who were married at Hull in 1812.

Joshua James married the daughter of John Lucihe (originally Luciche) who was born at Ragusa, in Dalmatia, came to this country from Trieste and married at Hull, Mar. 3, 1836, Elizabeth Torry Lovell, the daughter of Caleb Gould Lovell and Jane (Dill) Lovell.

Sirovich is another well known family name in Hull, suggestive of the eastern shore of the Adriatic. Nicholas Sirovich married Esther James, June 24, 1827. Cf. in part for the above *Hull Vital Records to 1850*, by James W. Baldwin, Boston, 1911.

station October 22, 1889, and served until his death in 1902, hereinafter related ; the charge of the stations of the Humane Society being intrusted by that organization to the captain's son, Osceola F. James.

Seven years after the establishment of the government station at Stony Beach occurred a rescue which well shows the despatch and efficiency with which the service there is performed, to say nothing of the determination and heroism of the men who participated in the rescue. December 16, 1896, the British Schooner "Ulrica," which was compelled to anchor because of the loss of her sails, dragged her anchors and stranded during a northeast gale and thick snow storm on Nantasket Beach about two and one-half miles from the station. A patrolman discovered her and immediately engaged a man and horses to haul a near-by lifeboat of the Humane Society to the scene of the wreck, and then hastened to report to the station.

Capt. James had already been informed by telephone, the railroad offered transportation to the place, and the crew at once started. They arrived at the same time with the man and horses bringing the lifeboat. Heavy seas were breaking over the vessel, threatening her destruction and the lives of the seven men on board, and fearing to wait for the beach apparatus which was on its way from the station, Capt. James decided to make an effort to reach the schooner with the lifeboat.

Six volunteers were secured, in addition to the government crew, and a launch was made. Only slow progress was possible because of the sea and the current, and when about half way to the schooner an immense wave struck the boat and drove her astern, tossing up the steering oar and throwing Capt. James overboard, but he got hold of a surfman's oar and was dragged ashore uninjured. The beach apparatus having now arrived, two shots were successfully fired over the mizzen rigging, nevertheless no attempt was made by the crew to haul the line aboard. A third shot was then fired which landed lower down within reach of the crew, and the hawser was pulled aboard and made fast. It was so low down that Capt. James saw it would be dangerous to attempt to haul the exhausted men through the breakers in the breeches buoy, so it was decided to try again with the lifeboat. A line was taken into the boat from the beach to aid in guiding it, and then another launch was made, five volunteers besides the regular crew being in the boat. By hauling on the hawser that had been sent out for the breeches buoy, and using the oars, together with the help of the line from the shore, the furious seas were safely met and the wreck reached, and one by one the exhausted and frostbitten men were taken off, and all landed without mishap.\*

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\* U. S. Life Saving Service Report for 1897, p. 147.

This splendid piece of work was recognized by the Humane Society by the gift of a silver medal to Capt. James, seven members of the government crew, and seven volunteers, namely: to Capt. Joshua James, George F. Pope, F. B. Mitchell, Matthew Hoar, James H. Murphy, Martin Quinn, J. H. Thorburn and F. L. Galiano, of the life saving station, and the following volunteers, — J. T. Galiano, A. A. Galiano, A. L. Mitchell, B. F. Pope, A. B. Mitchell, J. F. Dowd, and George Lowe.\*

November 27, 1898, witnessed the last great storm on the coast of Massachusetts, more furious than any since the storm of 1851 when Minot's Light was destroyed, and according to some accounts the worst storm that ever visited the coast of New England. Perhaps it will be longest remembered in Boston as the storm in which the Steamer "Portland" went down with all on board. Referring thereto, the Life Saving Report said,† "No such appalling calamity has occurred anywhere near by the coasts of the United States, or on the shore, for almost half a century, and it is doubtful whether there has been within the same period a coast storm of such Titanic power." It was particularly severe on the south shore of Massachusetts Bay. There were at least ten wrecks in that locality, viz: — The Pilot Boat "Colum-

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\* See List of Awards in the Reports of the Society.

† U. S. Life Saving Service Report for 1899, p. 26.



bia" at Scituate Beach, where she completely demolished a cottage, none of the crew surviving to tell the tale of the wreck.

The four-masted Schooner "Abel E. Babcock" pounded to pieces on Toddy Rocks, with the loss of all on board.

Coal Barge "No. 4" on Toddy Rocks, where she speedily went to pieces; of the five persons on board only two, the captain and a sailor, succeeding in reaching shore alive by clinging to a piece of the deck house.

The three-masted Schooner "Henry R. Tilton" near Toddy Rocks, all on board saved.

Coal Barge "No. 1," Windmill Point, Hull, all saved.

The Schooner "Calvin F. Baker" on the lighthouse island, with the loss of three lives.

The fishing Schooner "Mertis H. Perry" near the Brant Rock Life Saving Station, with the loss of five of her crew.

The two-masted Schooner "Jordan L. Mott," and the three-masted Schooner "Lester A. Lewis" sunk in Provincetown harbor, with the loss of seven lives.

The Schooner "Albert L. Butler" near the Peaked Hill Bars station, Cape Cod, all on board being lost.

Half of the wrecks were in the immediate vicinity of the life saving station at Stony Beach. Not since the great gales of December, 1839, were there so many disasters in the harbor. The storm struck like a tempest

on the evening of Saturday, November 26th, and raged with unprecedented violence for twenty-four hours, and with gradually abating force for twelve hours longer, — two nights and one day. There were indications that a storm was brewing, but what followed far exceeded all apprehensions. Said Capt. James, "By ten o'clock it was blowing a gale from the northeast, with sleet and snow so thick that we could not see a hundred yards at most. At midnight it was a hurricane."

Great damage was done to property along the coast. In the town of Hull, including Nantasket Beach, the loss was estimated at upwards of \$200,000. The railroad sea wall, constructed of heavy granite stones, was ruined for a mile, and the beaches were lowered two or three feet in some places and narrowed ten or fifteen feet. On Monday, November 28th, when the storm had spent its fury, the shores and surroundings were a stretch of wreck and ruin.\* A collection of forty-eight photographs taken in Hull immediately after the storm and published by Robert King Macadam, which may be found in the Boston Public Library, well bears out the accounts of the destructiveness of wind and wave and is worth an examination.

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\* U. S. Life Saving Service Report for 1889, pp. 25 *et seq.*

"At Scituate Point the whole village numbering upward of 100 dwellings was almost ruined, while many of the inhabitants narrowly escaped with their lives. In one instance, a woman was drowned while her husband was trying to assist her to escape from their dwelling," p. 26.



SCHOONER "HENRY R. TILTON"

On Stony Beach, Hull, after the Great Storm of November, 1898



The work of the patrolmen was attended with exceptional difficulty and risk, the wind being so fierce as to compel them frequently to turn their backs and to stop and crouch near to the earth for breath, while the in-rushing breakers rolling across the encumbered beaches often made them run for their lives to the upland. Nevertheless, the watch was maintained, and said Capt. James, "We succeeded in getting every man who was alive at the time we started for him, and we started at the earliest moment in every case."\*

The destruction of the Schooner "Babcock" and Barge "No. 4" on Toddy Rocks was so sudden and complete that no one knew anything of the disaster until the wreckage was discovered early in the morning near Windmill Point. The crew of the Schooner "Henry R. Tilton," which was driven ashore near the scene of the other wrecks, were more fortunate; the vessel held together and all seven on board were rescued by means of the breeches buoy, an achievement described by Lieut. Worth G. Ross, the District Inspector, as "a clean and efficient piece of work notwithstanding tremendous difficulties." In fact, during a considerable portion of the operation the life savers were exposed to as much danger as were the shipwrecked men. The work occupied several hours and

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\* *Joshua James*, by S. I. Kimball, pp. 91 and 95.

was successfully completed and the apparatus taken back to the station, when the wearied rescuers were informed that a coal barge known as "No. 1" had stranded and was going to pieces on the rocks lying off Windmill Point. They rushed to that wreck and were just in time to save the five men on board with the assistance of volunteers of the Humane Society, as in the case of the "Tilton."

The next morning Capt. James made out the masts of a vessel near the lighthouse. The distance was so great that it was not feasible to attempt to reach her with the government boat from the north side of Stony Beach, so the keeper went to the Humane Society's boat given by the *Boston Herald*, which was situated on the south side of the beach, and launched her into the smoother waters of Hull Bay. The crew then pulled to the Pemberton steamboat landing, where the Tug "Ariel" was engaged to tow the boat through Hull Gut and down to the lighthouse. The sea was running so high that the tug could not get nearer than a quarter mile from the island. Whereupon the surfboat was cast off and the life savers started for the wreck, a difficult and most dangerous task because of the character of the place where it was lying. Nevertheless, they succeeded in reaching the wreck, which proved to be that of the Schooner "Calvin F. Baker" from Baltimore to Boston with a cargo of coal, and in an hour and

a half were back to land with the five living members of her crew.

No sooner had they returned than they were advised that there were three men making signals of distress on Black Rock, at the extreme southerly end of Nantasket Beach, and more than six miles from the village of Hull. A team was secured to take the surfboat over land, and with five volunteers of the Humane Society they started off for another rescue. Arriving at the scene they found a tremendous sea dashing upon the rock. The boat was successfully launched, but when the ledge was reached it was found that it would be madness to attempt to approach the three men, and Capt. James ordered his men to rest upon their oars. For an hour the boat lay by waiting for an opening. Finally it came. The boat was rushed in, the three sailors drawn into it and in due time landed. "So successfully was all conducted," says the Life Saving Report, "that the boat had not suffered a single bruise."\* The three men rescued belonged to the Barge "Lucy A. Nichols" which had been broken up by the storm and they had managed to reach the rock on one of the masts.

That was the final task which the life savers were called upon to undertake in the great storm of 1898, and Capt. James could say with pride that they got

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\* Report for 1899, p. 33.

every man they started for.\* It was also the last notable rescue in which Capt. James was to figure. March 19, 1902 — some four years later — he called out his crew at seven o'clock in the morning for boat drill in the self-bailing boat. The drill was satisfactory, and the captain so expressed himself to his crew. When they landed he sprang out and turning remarked, "The tide is ebbing," and dropped dead on the beach. Thus ended the career of probably the best known life saver in the world. Those are not the writer's words, but the twice expressed opinion of the then superintendent of the Life Saving Service, who knew whereof he spoke.†

Capt. James' record speaks for itself, and without commenting upon the heroism of others in the service, this much at least may be said, that it is doubtful if he has had an equal in his ability to handle a boat in a sea. He was seventy-six years old at the time of his death, and if we take 1842 as the date when he first took part in a rescue, it means that he served as a life saver for full sixty years, — all of his manhood and part of his youth in that great work. His biographer has pointed out that there were eighty-six casualties within the field

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\* No medals were given for the rescues. For the awards made by the Humane Society, see the List in the Reports of the Society.

† *Joshua James*, by S. I. Kimball, p. 100.

U. S. Life Saving Service Report for 1902, p. 14.



of operations of the government station at Hull during the twelve years it was under Capt. James charge, that the value of the vessels and their cargoes totalled almost a million and a quarter dollars, and that they had on board 556 persons. Of property, approximately three-quarters was saved, and of the persons imperilled but sixteen lost their lives,—all in the great gale of November 26 and 27, 1898, under circumstances which placed them beyond the reach of human aid, and which even precluded an attempt to assist them.\*

The captain lies buried in the little graveyard on Gallup's Hill at Hull near the life saving station, where so much of his life work was performed, and over his grave stands a stone placed there in 1909 by the Humane Society, the first it is said ever erected by the Society in memory of a life saver. The stone is of pink Tennessee marble with the seal of the Society and the following inscription on the front :

CAPTAIN JOSHUA JAMES

BORN IN HULL	★	DIED IN HULL
NOVEMBER 22, 1826		MARCH 19, 1902
Greater Love Hath No Man Than This That		
A Man Lay Down His Life For His Friends.		

On the back, a fouled anchor and the inscription :

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\* *Joshua James*, by S. I. Kimball, p. 76.

Erected by the Humane Society  
of the  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
in memory of  
Joshua James  
Captain of the Humane Society's Life Boats  
At Hull and Nantasket for Many Years  
And Keeper of the United States Government's  
Life Saving Station at Hull 1889 to 1902.

The "decorations" received by Capt. James during his life were as follows :

- 1850 Bronze Medal — Humane Society — Brig "L'Essai."
- 1857 Certificate — Humane Society — Ship "Delaware."
- 1886 Silver Medal — Humane Society — Forty Years Service.
- 1888 Gold Medal — Act of Congress — November Storm.
- 1888 Gold Medal — Humane Society — November Storm.
- 1896 Silver Medal — Humane Society — Schooner "Ulrica."

The government station was temporarily in command of Francis B. Mitchell until the appointment of William C. Sparrow, the present keeper, on June 30, 1902. The Humane Society's boats are still in the care of the old keeper's son, Capt. Osceola F. James, and the work of both regulars and volunteers continues with the same quiet heroism and the same unselfish success.\*

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\* By Act of Congress approved Jan. 28, 1915, the former Revenue Cutter Service and Life Saving Service were combined into the United States Coast Guard (Navy Department), with a "Captain Commandant," and the station at Stony Beach is known as Coast Guard Station No. 26.

The snow storm of Dec. 26, 1909, which has been mentioned because of the extraordinary height of the tide which accompanied it (*supra* p. 11, note), happily did not cause any serious loss of life or shipping, but was productive of very great damage along shore. In the town of Hull all of Pemberton Point was submerged and the streets of the village flooded. The railroad track where it skirted Telegraph Hill and Stony Beach was washed away, and all along Nantasket Beach the water flowed inland, filling cellars, washing away the underpinning of houses, and otherwise injuring them. No one seems to have remembered so great a flood from the sea in that locality, and it was believed the damage would reach \$100,000. See *Boston Globe* of Dec. 27, 1909.

# NOTES

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## A

### Dates, character and tides of principal storms.

- Aug. 15, 1635. "The Great Storm," N. E. rain storm, violent wind, very high sea and tide; followed by eclipse of the moon.
- Feb. 24, 1723. N. E. rain storm, some hail, high wind and record tide, estimated 16 feet.
- Oct. 21, 1743. N. E. rain storm and high tide; eclipse of the moon.
- Apr. 20, 1764. N. E. rain and snow storm, high tide.
- Dec. 26, 1764. E. to N. E. wind storm and high tide.
- Mch. 25, 1765. N. E. snow storm, high sea and tide.
- Dec. 4, 1768. S. E. rain storm, violent wind.
- Oct. 20, 1770. N. N. E. rain storm, violent wind, very high sea and tide, 15 feet (?); began on night of 19th.
- Dec. 4, 5, and 8, 1786. "The Snow Storms of December, 1786." Two N. E. storms, much snow, very high tide, 15 feet (?).
- Nov. 17-21, 1798. "The Long Snow Storm," an unprecedented fall of snow.
- Feb. 21, 1802. "The Great Snow Storm," almost a week of snow.
- Oct. 9, 1804. S. E. to N. N. E. storm, rain and snow, thunder and lightning, very high wind.
- Sept. 22, 23, 1815. "The September Gale," N. E. rain storm, then E., E. N. E. and S. E., violent wind in gusts and high tide; began on morning of 22d, abated, blew again fiercely on 23d and ceased suddenly.
- Mch. 26, 1830. N. E. rain and snow storm, very high tide, 15.12 feet.
- Dec. 15, 21 and 27, 1839. "The Dreadful Hurricanes of December, 1839." Three E. storms: First, Snow, freezing rain and violent wind; Second, Less severe; Third, E. to E. S. E. violent wind and high tide.
- Oct. 3, 4, 1841. "The October Gale," E. storm, high wind and sea; began at midnight Oct. 2nd, increased in violence to 4th, abated morning of 5th.

Nov. 30, 1842.	E. S. E. snow storm, then rain, high wind.
Sept. 26, 1847.	N. E. storm and very high tide, 15.24 feet.
Oct. 7, 1849.	N. E. rain storm, unusual fall of rain.
Apr. 14-16, 1851.	"The Minot's Light Gale," E. storm, rain, hail and snow, wind of great violence; began 14th and reached height 16th, when it blew down first Minot's Ledge Lighthouse; extraordinarily high tide, averaging 15.62 feet.
Sept. 8, 1869.	The second September Gale, S. E. storm, heavy rain, violent wind.
Nov. 25, 26, 1888.	"The Storm of November, 1888," N. E. snow storm of great violence.
Nov. 26, 27, 1898.	"The Great Storm of November, 1898," sometimes called "The Portland Storm," N. E. snow storm of tremendous power and destructiveness; high tide, 14.94 feet.
Dec. 26, 1909.	N. E. snow storm and extraordinarily high and destructive tide, average 15.60 feet.

## B

## Dates, names and locations of principal wrecks.

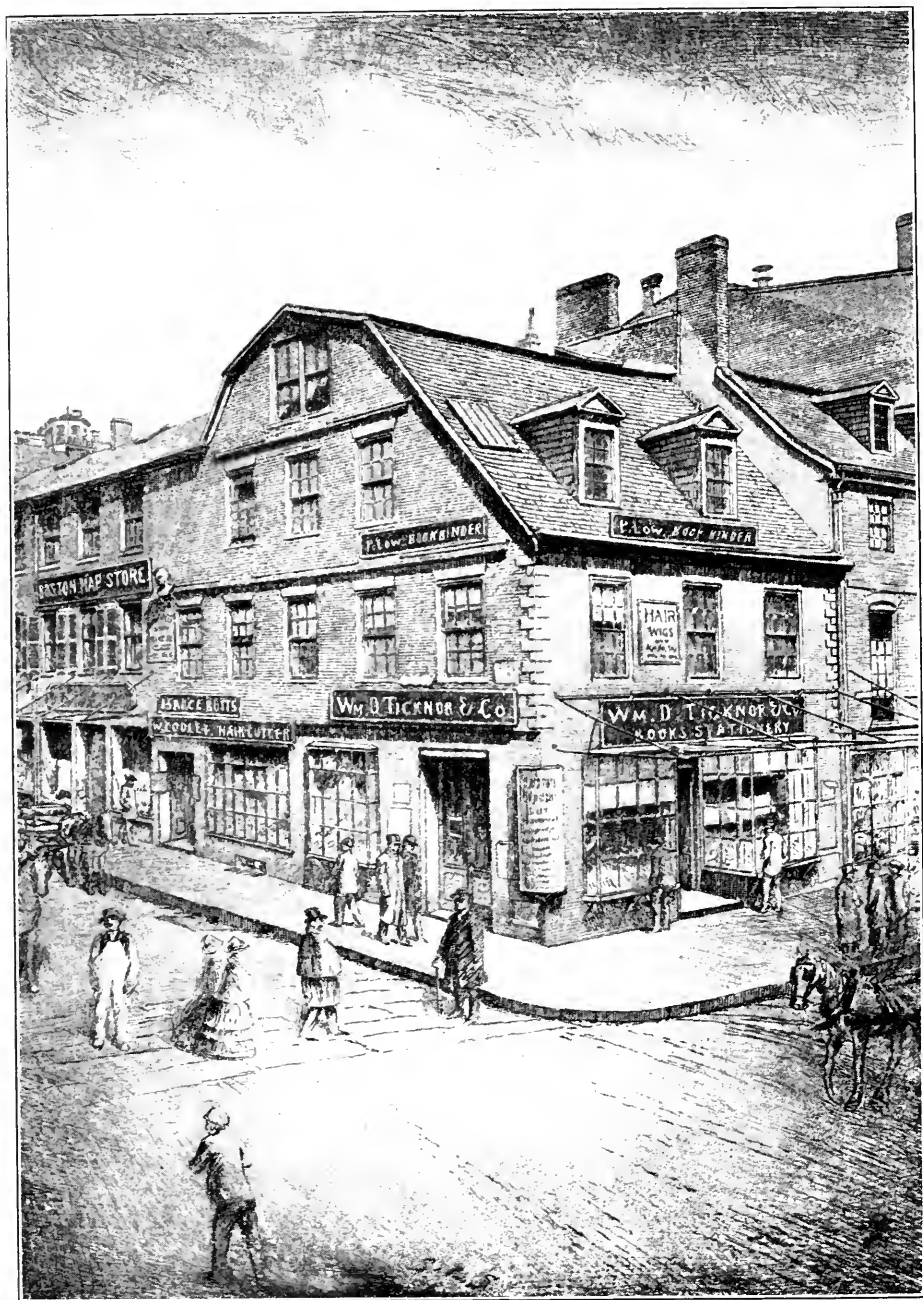
Sept. 28, 1697.	Ship "Providence,"	Harding's Ledge.
Jan. 31, 1702.	Brigantine "Mary,"	Marblehead.
Nov. 3, 1703.	Ship "John,"	George's Island.
Nov. 12, 1714.	Sloop "Hazard,"	Cohasset.
Jan. 28, 1767.	Brig —,	Lovells Island.
Dec. 4, 1768.	Brigantine —,	Near Boston Light.
Dec. 4, 1786.	Brig "Lucretia,"	Point Shirley.
Dec. 8, 1786.	Coasting Schooner,	Lovells Island.
Dec. 15, 1839.	Schooner "Enterprise,"	Cohasset.
Dec. 15, 1839.	Schooner "Katherine Nichols,"	Nahant.
Dec. 22, 1839.	Schooner "Charlotte,"	Nantasket Beach.
Dec. 23, 1839.	Bark "Lloyd,"	Nantasket Beach.
Apr. 30, 1841.	Schooner "Emeline,"	Point Allerton.
Apr. 30, 1841.	Sloop "Warsaw,"	Cohasset.
Oct. 4, 1841.	"Maine" of Bath,	Scituate.
Oct. 4, 1841.	Schooner "Miller,"	Nantasket Beach.
Nov. 20, 1841.	Brig "Constantia,"	Scituate.

Dec. 17, 1841.	Ship "Mohawk,"	Point Allerton.
Dec. 30, 1842.	"Maine" of Dennis,	Cohasset.
Oct. 7, 1844.	Brig "Tremont,"	Point Allerton.
Dec. 11, 1844.	Ship "Massasoit,"	Point Allerton.
Oct. 7, 1849.	Brig "St. John,"	Minot's Ledge.*
Apr. 5, 1850.	Brig "L'Essai,"	Nantasket Beach.
Jan. 19, 1857.	Brig "New Empire,"	Cohasset.
Jan. 19, 1857.	Ship "California,"	Cohasset.
Jan. 19, 1857.	Schooner "Geneva,"	Scituate.
Jan. 19, 1857.	Bark "Tedesco,"	Swampscott.
Mch. 2, 1857.	Ship "Delaware,"	Toddy Rocks.
Mch. 2, 1857.	Brig "Odessa,"	Stony Beach.
Mch. 2, 1857.	Brig "Lorana,"	Nantasket Beach.
Mch. 9, 1860.	Brig "Ewan Crerar,"	Near Boston Light.
Nov. 3, 1861.	Ship "Maritana,"	Shag Rocks.
Nov. 3, 1861.	Bark "Nathaniel Cogswell,"	Scituate.
Dec. (?), 1864.	Brig "Swordfish,"	Toddy Rocks.
Dec. 23, 1870.	Schooner "R. W. Genn,"	Nantasket Beach.
Dec. 26, 1872.	Bark "Kadosh,"	Point Allerton.
Mch. (?), 1873.	Schooner "Helene,"	Point Allerton.
Feb. 1, 1882.	Schooner "Bucephelus,"	Nantasket Beach.
Feb. 1, 1882.	Schooner "Nettie Walker,"	Toddy Rocks.
Dec. 1, 1885.	Brig "Anita Owen,"	Nantasket Beach.
Jan. 9, 1886.	Schooner "Mollie Trim,"	Calf Island.
Nov. 25, 26, 1888.	Schooner "Cox & Green,"	Toddy Rocks.
Nov. 25, 26, 1888.	Schooner "Gertrude Abbott,"	Toddy Rocks.
Nov. 25, 26, 1888.	Schooner "Bertha F. Walker,"	Near Toddy Rocks.
Nov. 25, 26, 1888.	Schooner "H. C. Higginson,"	Nantasket Beach.
Nov. 25, 26, 1888.	Schooner "Mattie E. Eaton,"	Nantasket Beach.
Dec. 16, 1896.	Schooner "Ulrica,"	Nantasket Beach.
Nov. 26, 27, 1898.	Steamer "Portland,"	At sea.
Nov. 26, 27, 1898.	Pilot Boat "Columbia,"	Scituate.
Nov. 26, 27, 1898.	Schooner "Abel E. Babcock,"	Toddy Rocks.
Nov. 26, 27, 1898.	Coal Barge "No. 4,"	Toddy Rocks.
Nov. 26, 27, 1898.	Schooner "Henry R. Tilton,"	Stony Beach.
Nov. 26, 27, 1898.	Coal Barge "No. 1,"	Windmill Point.
Nov. 26, 27, 1898.	Schooner "Calvin F. Baker,"	Near Boston Light.

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\* See Thoreau's *Cape Cod* for an account of the wreck of the "St. John."





THE OLD CORNER BOOK STORE.

By Courtesy of the Iconographic Society.



# THE OLD CORNER BOOK STORE

BY

FRANK E. BRADISH.





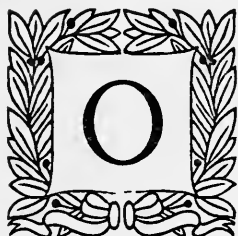
## THE OLD CORNER BOOK STORE.

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A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
OLD STATE HOUSE, MARCH 11, 1890, BY

FRANK E. BRADISH.

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ON a bright June morning some two hundred and sixty years ago, when the northwest wind was ruffling the waters of the Basin into a thousand white feathers and bringing the sweet scent of pine woods from the mountains of New Hampshire and Vermont down to the ocean, Rev. William Blaxton, standing in the doorway of his house on the western slope of Beacon Hill, saw approach over the water a small boat, having seated in the stern a single passenger, — evidently one of the new-comers from England who had settled on the low-lands on the other side of the river. As he walked down the slope to meet his guest, the boat's keel cut into the shore and the passenger alighted ; it was Mr. Isaac Johnson whom he

had met when he visited Charlestown a few days before to invite the colonists to establish their permanent home on the peninsula.

Mr. Johnson was a young man, not thirty years of age, of a handsome person dressed plainly but richly in the becoming fashion of the day. He was of honorable lineage, for he was the great-grandson of Maurice Johnson who had been Member of Parliament for Stamford more than a hundred years before, and his grandfather was Rev. Robert Johnson, archdeacon of Leicester, a man of taste, learning and wealth, who had founded several public schools, and who on his death five years before had left to this, his favorite grandson, all his property as well as his library and cabinet, which made the young man many times richer than any other of the settlers of Massachusetts. This large bequest was an indication not only of affection but of sympathy in character, for Rev. Robert was an ambitious man, and Isaac more than any other of his family had satisfied his hopes by marrying a daughter of one of the greatest peers of the realm, Lady Arbella Clinton (or Fienes), daughter of Thomas, third Earl of Lincoln.

The house of Clinton was illustrious as well as ancient, and Sir Edward, the first Lord Lincoln of the name, Lady Arbella's great-grandfather, had only re-established his family on firmer foundations; a valued servant of the Crown, he had added honor to honor and manor to manor, until his house was one of the pillars

of the state. Governor Dudley, the equal of Winthrop and Endicott, had been steward to Lady Arbella's father, and felt an unfeigned respect for the great family he had served.

Mr. Isaac Johnson was not unworthy of the advantages which fortune had bestowed on him ; he had been the rival of Mr. Winthrop, a man of years and experience, in the election of Governor in 1629, a mark of respect which neither his exalted marriage nor his inherited wealth could entirely account for ; and his contemporaries have left us their recollections of the piety and modesty, which were especially conspicuous in him who was unquestionably the first gentleman of the Colony.

He greeted Mr. Blaxton cordially, and in reply to his inquiries as to the health of his wife, said that Lady Johnson was quite ill in Salem, but he hoped a still further change of climate might be beneficial to her, and therefore he was in haste to settle as soon as possible in a suitable place ; it was on that errand, he explained, that he had crossed the river, for he understood that on this island there was plenty of fresh water, which was not the case on the opposite shore, and with Mr. Blaxton's permission, he would explore the country. Mr. Blaxton offered to be his guide, suggesting that on the other side of the peninsula was a better location for a large settlement, for there the harbor was better and easier of access. So they slowly climbed the hill, about

on the present line of Beacon Street, and Mr. Johnson admired the charms of the place as his companion pointed out to him its prominent features. "Truly a beautiful spot," he said, "but I see that we shall have to bring our wood from the forest which frowns along the mainland; surely you have not cleared all this land." "No," answered Mr. Blaxton, "a little garden-plot and orchard is enough for me; the land was cleared as you see it by the salvages before I came here; they must, I think, have had extensive corn-fields here at one time, but I seldom see a red man now. That shapely elm, which you see there beyond that little hill which juts into the marsh, is the only tree of any size that I have ever seen near here. As they stopped to admire the tree's symmetrical growth and waving foliage, a bull-frog uttered his welcome,—"*gudthrunk, gudthrunk*,"—and plunged into the pond which bears his name. "The tree is in shape and size," said Mr. Johnson, "a fit substitute for the justice-oak of our native land; and if the spot were a little drier, you, as lord of the manor, might hold your court in its shade, though few vassals would answer your summons, save such as the frog who just spoke so loudly and earnestly." His companion smiled, and pointing in the opposite direction, said "I pray you, Sir, notice the curious crown of this hill; on those three peaks your watchmen may command an outlook over all the approaches from the land. It can also be seen from a great distance, and from its appear-

ance your settlement might well take the name, 'Tri-mountain.'” “It is,” was the reply, “a position of much strategical advantage, but our town wherever we place it, will bear another name. We have agreed already to call our capital Boston, in honor of the town from which many of our company have come.” \* As he spoke they reached the summit and the southeast slope laid before them, bright in the morning sunshine, and beyond it lay the blue waters of the harbor and the islands covered with rustling trees. The young man stopped and gazed at the scene a moment in silence. At last he said “Nowhere in the old world or the new, have I seen a spot so fit for a city's foundation; with this harbor before it, and rivers on both sides of it. It would be hard to intrude upon your retirement, Mr. Blaxton, but do you not think Christ's kingdom would be much advanced if this place should support the large population for which nature so evidently intends it, pro-

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\* The reference to William Blaxton in this article gives an opportunity to print the following matter communicated to the Society by a member, Mr. W. K. Watkins, at its meeting 20 Nov., 1917, when Rev. F. B. Allen read a paper entitled “The Very Beginning of Boston.”

In 1886 Thomas C. Amory published for the Society a memoir of Blaxton. It was reprinted by the Society in Volume I of its Publications. In this memoir Mr. Amory refers to the family of Blakiston of County Durham of which he considered the emigrant was a member. This view has been taken by all other investigators and writers.

The English data known was that his birth was in 1595/6 and that at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, he wrote his name “William Blaxton” when he took his degrees in 1617 and 1623.

Twenty-one miles east of Lincoln and about the same distance north of Boston in old England is the parish of Horncastle. In this parish in

vided they be right minded, rather than it should remain the hermitage of even so holy a recluse as you?" "Whether you and your associates make it your immediate residence or not, this place will be too near to a settlement for my taste, and I shall move farther into the wilderness," replied Mr. Blaxton, "yet I have enjoyed its beauties, and have been here unmolested by the natives." "But surely these are their trails," said Mr. Johnson as they moved down the hill. "Yes," was the reply, "these paths were all here when I came," and as he spoke they passed the present site of the King's Chapel, — "This lot of about six acres on our left is marked out by four of their principal trails; the one we have followed over the hill leads from the spring by my house to the spring I shall show you on the shore yonder, and this one," he said, as they reached Washington Street, "is that by which the Indians travelled from the neck leading to the mainland at the south

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the 16th century was a branch of the Blaxton family of Blaxton Hall, Yorks. John Blaxton of Horncastle married (1) Agnes or Anne Hawley and had John, bapt. 14 July, 1594; *William, bapt. 5 Mch., 1595/6*; George, bapt. 12 Dec., 1600; Frances, bapt. 30 Nov., 1592; Anne, bapt. 20 May, 1597; Muriall, bapt. 5 Oct., 1599. It will be noted that the birth date of this William agrees with that of William the emigrant.

Of the brothers, John was buried 2 Mch., 1622/3, and George a year later. Their mother died in 1602, and the father married (2), Susan Butler.

Johnson in his "Wonder-working Providence" refers to Mr. Blaxton as a clergyman "retaining no simbole of his former profession, but a Canonically Coate." No record has as yet been found as to where Blaxton was ordained as a clergyman or officiated in such a capacity.



to a path around the north bay, which is only passable at low tide." "Then here," said Mr. Johnson, as he stood on the site of the Old Corner Book Store, "here would be the natural centre of the town. If my associates are willing, I will build on this spot, and the tract of land bounded by these paths shall be sufficient for my grounds." They walked down to the spring and tasted its waters; they examined the two other hills which commanded the eastern bay, and at noon Mr. Johnson returned to the mainland to report to his companions that he had found a favorable site for permanent settlement and to urge them to remove to it at once.

To add force to his recommendation, a few days later he took with him laborers to the hill town and nearly on the site of the Old Corner Book Store, he built with all speed a house, small indeed in comparison with his English home, but large enough to be a protection from the early New England winter, and substantial enough to make comfortable his wife whom he hoped to remove thither from Salem,—but alas! in the last week of August, as Prince tells us, "died at Salem, the Lady Arbella, wife of Mr. Johnson, who came from a paradise of delight and plenty she enjoyed in the family of a noble earldom, into this wilderness of straits, and now left her worthy consort overwhelmed in grief and tears." Nevertheless he resolutely gave his attention to the affairs of the Colony, and to forward the settlement of Boston. He moved into his new house and

there widowed and childless faded away of grief. Doubtless as he lay on his dying bed, he was visited by the faithful Dudley, who had wept over the grave of his young mistress in Salem,—and Winthrop and Endicott and their companions brought him the grim consolations of their religion.

From his front windows he looked longingly over the leagues of water that separated him from the home of his childhood ; for the rugged scenery of New England though stimulating to the courage of vigorous manhood, was depressing to spirits enfeebled by sickness. His interest in the settlement held out until the last, and perhaps on the Monday before his death he was well enough to be consulted by those with whom he was associated in the government of the Colony, as to the precautions to be taken at the Court of Assistants to be held the next morning at Charlestown, which he could not attend, to prevent firearms getting into possession of Indians ; but on “Thursday September 30,” Governor Winthrop tells us, “about two in the morning, Mr. Isaac Johnson dies. He was an holy man and wise, and died in sweet peace ; leaving part of his substance to the colony ;” \* and Mr. Dudley wrote to the Countess Lincoln, Mr. Johnson’s sister-in-law, “On the 30th of Sept. dyed Mr. Johnson, another of the 5 undertakers (the Lady Arbella his wife beeing dead a month

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\* For Isaac Johnson’s will see Massachusetts Historical Society’s Collections, 3d Series, Vol. 8, p. 244.

before). This gent<sup>n</sup> was prime man amongst us, having the best estate of any,—zealous for religion and the greatest furtherer of this plantaçõn. He made a most godly end, dying willingly ; professing his life better spent in promoting this plantaçõn than it would have been in any other way. He left to us a loss greater than most conceived.”

A day or two later, a sad funeral train passed from that corner, up what is now School Street, and in the upper end of his lot in a spot he had himself selected, the beginning and cause of the old graveyard, Mr. Johnson was buried. We may imagine the grief of Dudley, and the clouded brows of Winthrop and Bradstreet and the Assistants, as they followed the bier up the narrow path and saw lowered to his last home one of the main props of their undertaking ; and the heavy hearts of the people who gathered around to pay the last token of respect to him they loved so well. Thus lived and died on its soil the original founder of Boston.

The account which I have given you and which I believe to be substantially true, is what Prince learned from Chief Justice Sewall, supported by the account of the settlement in the public records. A half century ago, Dr. N. B. Shurtleff conceived a prejudice against this story because the stone, which down to that time had been supposed to mark Isaac Johnson’s grave, was of a kind not used here until a generation after Johnson’s death, and from such a beginning unbelief grew,

until by the positiveness of the skeptics' assertions and the sneer of Mr. Savage that "a splendid myth as to his place of burial has possession of the common credulity" the whole fabric of facts seemed to have dissolved.

But what is picturesque is not necessarily untrue, and we exhibit no "credulity" if we prefer to accept the statement of fact by Prince, rather than an inference of Shurtleff and Savage. To Dr. Shurtleff, starting with this predisposition against the genuineness of Johnson's gravestone, it seemed as if the place of burial of Lady Arbella being in Salem; the short time which elapsed between the landing in America and Mr. Johnson's death; the statements by old writers that the settlers first lived in huts; and many facts in the general history of the time supported the negative argument. But in the *Boston Transcript* of 4 November, 1853, at the time Bridgman's "Memorials of the Dead" came out with Rev. Mr. Peabody's Introduction, Mr. John Ward Dean, then a young man, gave the reasons which satisfied him that the old story should be relied on, and to-day, when no American antiquary will claim learning superior to his, his opinion on this point is unchanged.

Let me recapitulate the reasons for this opinion. In his *New England Chronology* (p. 319), Thomas Prince says: "The late Chief Justice Samuel Sewall, Esq., informed me, that this Mr. Johnson was the principal cause of settling the town of Boston, and so of its becoming

the metropolis, and had removed hither ; had chosen for his lot the great square lying between Cornhill on the southeast, and Tremont Street on the northwest, Queen Street on the northeast, and School Street on the southwest, and on his death-bed desiring to be buried at the upper end of his lot, in faith of his rising in it. He was accordingly buried there,—which gave occasion for the first burying place of this town to be laid out round about his grave.”\* No one will venture to insinuate that Prince was not entirely honest, or that in so circumstantial an account he misstated what had been told him, nor would anyone doubt the candor of Judge Sewall, whose most conspicuous moral characteristic is his honesty ; so that the question really resolves itself into this,—whether Judge Sewall had opportunity to know the truth in the matter and whether the circumstances make it probable that his statement was of a tradition in his day rather than a positive statement of fact. Now Boswell has not made us better acquainted with Dr. Samuel Johnson than the now famous diary has made us acquainted with Sewall, and we know that his tastes led him to investigate exactly such subjects as this ; he revelled in detailed narrative, and he revered so much those who founded New England, that such a pathetic story of one of their leaders would have excited his deepest interest.

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\* A Chronological History in the Form of Annals, by Thomas Prince, 3d edition, 1852, p. 319.

Although he himself did not come to America until 1661, many of the original settlers were still living here at that time who could tell him of their own knowledge of what happened in 1630. Simon Bradstreet was not only still alive,—“the Nestor of New England,”—but we know that he was one of Sewall’s most intimate friends, and who would know the facts as to the earliest times so well as Bradstreet, who was Secretary of the Colony when Isaac Johnson was an Assistant, and for many years after? Bradstreet crossed the ocean in the ship with Johnson and Lady Arbella,—he knew where Isaac Johnson lived while in America and he knew where he was buried,—indeed he must have followed him to his grave,—he surely would have corrected any mistake young Sewall might make as to Isaac Johnson’s life and death. If the slate stone to which Dr. Shurtleff objected was not put up until 30 years after Johnson’s death there is no reason to doubt that it marked his grave, for even, which is very improbable, if a temporary tablet of wood had not marked the spot, it would have been easy to identify the place by the recollection of many persons living. That the “Book of Possessions” does not show Johnson’s land is accounted for by his position in the community, which would have placed his name with John Winthrop’s\* on that first leaf of the book which is now lost.

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\* The first leaf of the Book of Possessions is missing and on it is supposed to have been recorded the lands held by Governor Winthrop.

As to the general objections, it is urged that Johnson could have had no house here to die in, because there were at that time no houses built on the peninsula ; but Prince's statement includes this fact "that this Mr. Johnson was the principal cause of settling the town of Boston " and had already come hither and would naturally commit himself to the venture by being the first to build. Then you will remember that Dudley in his letter to the Countess Lincoln after speaking of the changes of location in choosing a place of settlement says "We were forced to plant dispersedly . . . . This dispersion troubled some of us, but help it we could not wanting ability to any place fit to build a Town upon, and the time too short to deliberate any longer lest the winter should surprize us before wee had builded our

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The following document never before published shows this and also that the record was made by William Aspinwall, confirming the theories of Messrs. Crocker, Hassam, Whitmore and others.

" John Marion junr of full age Testifieth. That many years sence I have heard some of the Antient inhabitants of this town speak of a Book which they called Mr. Aspinalls wherein theire Houses & Lands were Entered which could not be found. I sumtime after the death of Deacon Henry Allen I being at Mr Joseph Webb desced his office asked him to lett me have Something Antient to Read & uppon which the sd Webb put the aforesd Book into my hand and Reding of it I found it to bee the Book wherein there was a very orderly Entery of the Houses & Lands of the Inhabitants of the Towne and as I Remember it began with the Governor Winthrops possession and so goes on. I speaking with some of the antient persons concerning this Book I was informed that the Entereys in that Book was done by Mr Aspinall by the Direction of the Towne or some persons by their Appointment and that Mr Aspinall was a publick offisser as Secretary, Recorder & Publick Notary. I further Testify that at my Request the Selectmen petitioned the quarter Sessions that the aforesd Book might be deliv-

houses. . . . So ceasing to consult further for that time they who had health to labour fell to building, wherein many were interrupted with sickness, and many dyed weekeley, nay almost dayley." This general building began early in the autumn, and we may reasonably infer that the richest man in the Colony would be among the first to build a substantial house especially if he built it on a spot to which he was trying to attract his influential companions. There were workmen to be had in the Colony and those who could pay them exorbitant wages employed them earlier than 23 August, 1630, when "It was ordered, that carpenters, joyners, brickelayers, sawers, and thatchers shall not take aboue 2s a day, nor any man shall giue more, vnder paine of xs to taker &

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ered to the Town Clerk then being Mr Griggs which accordingly was Granted.

" Suff. Boston, May 3 1705

" Sworn to in the Superior Court by John Marion

" Attest ELISHA COOKE  
Cler."

Mr. Joseph Webb was clerk of the county court of Suffolk 1689-1692, and of the Inferior Court 1692-1698. In 1689 the inhabitants made choice of him as clerk of the writs for the town. William Griggs was town clerk 1697-1700. Deacon Henry Allen died in 1696. Deacon John Marion born in Boston about 1651, died there 3 Jan., 1728, in his 78th year. The deposition was used in 1705 in a case between Joseph Allen, shipwright, and Henry Hill, distiller, in regard to land between Fort Hill and Windmill Point granted to William Teft and recorded in the Book of Possessions. In Joseph Allen's reasons of appeal was stated—"The reason of Deacon Allen's taking a lease was because the Records were lost & supposed to have been burnt with Mr. Aspinalls house, and Deacon Allen would never find ye Record in his life time for the book lay undiscovered til Deacon John Marion found it abt 7 or 8 years agoe."

W. K. WATKINS.



giuer." \* I think in view of the directness of the evidence we may still believe the interesting tale which was accepted as true for nearly two centuries.

If we believe that Isaac Johnson's lot in Boston and his grave were as here Prince describes them to have been, where would his house have stood? No doubt at the other end of the lot from his grave. Those melancholy little family burial lots with which we are all familiar in the New England farming districts, are never near the homes of the living, and it was not good then more than it is now for our minds or our bodies to dwell too near the past. We may be certain where his house stood, by another token. A sufficient supply of fresh water was the principal object sought in locating the new town; the lack of it in Charlestown was the reason for leaving there. Its fine springs were the chief recommendation of the Peninsula. Isaac Johnson, who led the settlers here, certainly would have built his house as near the spring as he conveniently could, and that would be near the southeast corner of his lot. But we can locate it more closely than that. If the streets of Boston were not laid out on parallelograms but on the paths of Mr. Blaxton's cows, why did not the path to the spring follow the cow-track, which coming down School Street would never have made that sharp and unnecessary bend in their course, but would have made a straight line for their watering place? Spring Lane

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\* Mass. Bay Records, Vol. 1, p. 74.

swerved from the old cow path for the convenience of Isaac Johnson's household, and as surely as we find the spring at one end of the lane we find Isaac Johnson's house at the other end. It then must have stood partly or entirely on the site of the Old Corner Book Store.

As to the character of Isaac and his wife Arbella, we may infer from their circumstances and from a study of human nature that they were at once pious and ambitious. To their piety, all the colonists testify; and on the other hand Abraham Johnson, father of Isaac, tells us\* he disliked his father and his son because of their ambition, an ambition which was gratified by a marriage which he thought disproportioned. Oliver Cromwell was a pious man, but he did not despise power nor the means necessary to acquire it,—Lady Jane Grey was modest and devout, but her piety and learning did not prevent her thinking a crown a becoming ornament for her head, and risking her head itself for the gewgaw it might wear. None of the colonists in coming to America sacrificed so much luxury and such prospects of advancement as Isaac and Arbella Johnson. The most meagre account of Tattershall Castle, home of the Earl of Lincoln, fills the imagination with the sumptuous life of a baronial home; hundreds of servitors thronged its wide spread building, and its tower 100 feet in height and so massive that in the thickness of its walls there

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\* N. E. Hist. Gen. Register, Vol. 8 (1854), pp. 360, 361.

were rooms and galleries, looked beyond its two brick lined moats over leagues of fertile country, cultivated by a loyal tenantry. Her ladyship's relatives in every degree, were powerful throughout the land, and her father and brother were favorites at court. If Isaac and Arbella surrendered all these inducements to vanity that they might worship God in the wilderness, they may be pardoned if they still retained a trifle of ambition.

Many years ago, Dr. Shurtleff took Mr. Dean to the King's Chapel Burying Ground and pointed out to him the spot where early in this century he had seen in his youth the reputed gravestone of Isaac Johnson, and last December as we left the meeting of the Bostonian Society, Mr. Dean led me to the place and showed me the spot which Dr. Shurtleff had pointed out to him. By the removal of the fence to widen Tremont Street some years ago, it is now covered by the sidewalk opposite the fourth iron post in the graveyard fence,\* and there we may reasonably believe lies all that was mortal of Isaac Johnson, "buried at the upper end of his lot in faith of his rising in it."

As we pause there to ponder his sad story, let us reflect what a different aspect this colony would have worn towards the Puritan rebellion in England if the

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\* It is 49 feet 3 inches north of the most northerly stone post in front of King's Chapel, measuring along the line of the fence of the graveyard, and 2 feet 6 inches west on the sidewalk from the stone base of the fence. The gravestone faced north or south.

chief man here had been, not a middle aged country gentleman of introspective cast of mind, but an ambitious young man, grandson to churchmen of high rank, and cousin and brother-in-law to ardent royalist noblemen. Perhaps the great debt Massachusetts owes to Governor Winthrop was made possible by the premature death of Isaac Johnson.

The fate of the next occupants of the old corner was as sad as that of the Johnsons. A quarter of a millenium ago, the women, like their husbands and brothers, were mostly interested in theology, and thereby one woman, like mother Eve, got herself and many men into grave difficulty. This was Mrs. Ann Hutchinson who came with her husband from England in 1634. She was a lady of descent and worship, for she was one of the twenty children of Rev. Francis Marbury of Alford, County Lincoln, and her mother, Bridget, sister of Sir Erasmus Dryden, was great-aunt of the poet John Dryden. Her ancestors were entitled to coats of arms, and even her clerical opponents, while she was among them, spoke of her respectfully as "that gentlewoman." Her husband, Mr. William Hutchinson, though not so well descended as his wife, was of respectable family, his grandfather, John Hutchinson, having been Mayor of Lincoln. Whether his mild temper was a gift of nature, or was the result of that conjugal discipline by which husbands are perfected, does not appear, but Governor Winthrop describes him as "a man of a very

mild temper and weak parts and wholly guided by his wife."

Yet we know that he was much respected by his neighbors, for as soon as he was admitted a freeman of the colony they chose him in March, 1635, to represent them in the General Court. His reputation, however, is overshadowed by that of his wife, who as the champion of the Antinomian heresy in Massachusetts, was the most formidable antagonist of the Puritan chiefs. She was their equal in piety and intellect and she shook the new state to its foundations. Having left England that she might be near Mr. Cotton, her former pastor, whose preaching she thought conduced to her spiritual growth, she was not in full sympathy with the rulers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and the clergy who supported their views with the artillery of religion. Even her enemies admitted that her character was spotless,—her virtues were the foundation of her power,—she was noted first for her helpfulness to those of her own sex in their physical and spiritual needs, but she soon became known for the quickness of her wit and the readiness of her tongue. We need not pause to investigate the tenets of the Antinomians,—it is sufficient to know that the women whose religious faith had been strengthened by Mrs. Hutchinson's conversation when she visited them in their own houses, eagerly thronged to hers to hear her criticize the sermons of the great preachers of Boston of that day.

It would be no wonder if her self-confidence was stimulated by the deference paid to her, for not only women were her followers, but many men of prominence. A highly respectable company it was that met in her parlor; among them were Mr. Coddington, one of the Court of Assistants, and her next door neighbor on the north; William Aspinwall, the Recorder, who lived on Washington Street just south of her; Dummer, and other officials. Her most illustrious disciple was Mr. Harry Vane, the young supplanter of Winthrop in the governor's chair, son of a privy councillor, high in the confidence of King Charles. He had been sent to New England at the King's suggestion to cure him of his Puritanism, which royalty looked on as a mere "fad," in obedience to which the young gallant had abjured the court and had sheared off his long, glossy curls. Descendant and namesake of Sir Harry Vane, who had been knighted 350 years before by the Black Prince on Poitiers' glorious field, his courage was not to be misguided by the King or browbeaten by provincial magistrates,—he espoused here what he believed to be the cause of true religion, and returned to England to become one of the martyrs to freedom,—a sacrifice to the manes of the king who had thought to quench in him the flame of liberty by showing him its extravagances. A century later his blood mingled in the veins of his great-grandson with that of the tyrant who had destroyed him, and now both currents flow tranquilly in the house of the Dukes of Cleveland.

In the summer of 1637, Vane no doubt brought to Mrs. Hutchinson's house his guests, James, Lord Ley, son and heir of the Earl of Marlborough, and Captain Francis Champernowne, nephew of Sir Ferdinand Gorges,\* and sent out by Gorges to govern New Hampshire. Led by men of such distinction the town of Boston soon went over almost unanimously to the party of Mrs. Hutchinson, and for the bitter consequences, surely the old corner must bear some of the responsibility, for the worshipful Governor Winthrop lived just opposite, and how galling it must have been to his pride, to receive an ironically courteous salute from the lady standing by her fence across the narrow street, as he stepped through his own gateway, when from the windows of his house he had often seen the Boston matrons,—stern-visaged as when they cried fie, on Hester Pryne,—and the fewer, but more influential gentlemen, enter the house built by Isaac Johnson, to be there encouraged in the heresy which was doubly offensive to Winthrop, because it nourished discontent with the government he and his friends had founded!

You remember in the report of the evidence at Mrs. Hutchinson's trial, while the attention of the ministers was wholly absorbed in the slight she had put on their preaching,—saying that they had not the seals, and spoke like the Apostles before the Ascension,—as to which remark you will probably agree with Mr. Cotton,

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\* N. E. Hist. Gen. Register, Vol. 29 (1875), p. 44.

that they should have deemed it sufficiently complimentary,—the magistrates turned their criticisms to the political results of her claim to inspiration. For less dangerous utterances they had driven Henry Dunster from Harvard College and Roger Williams from the Salem church into the snows of mid-winter, gentlemen both, of breeding and piety,—and should this weak woman confront them with impunity? No! Behind the gentle but offended Winthrop was the iron will of the fierce Endicott, the hater of papist and all other malcontents, who

“Had shorn with his sword the cross from out  
The flag, and cloven the May-pole down,  
Harried the heathen round about,  
And whipped the Quakers from town to town.  
Earnest and honest,—a man at need  
To burn like a torch for his own harsh creed—  
He kept with the flaming brand of his zeal  
The gate of the holy common weal.”

So Mrs. Hutchinson was “convented,” as the records express it, before the Court sitting in Cambridge, because it did not dare to sit in Boston for fear of a popular demonstration in her favor. She conducted her own defence, and depended entirely on her own testimony and on what she could extort from her adversaries by her taunting replies to their questions; so biting were her rejoinders that even the mild tempered Gover-



nor was provoked into saying "We do not mean to discourse with those of your sex, but only this,—you do . . . endeavor to set forward this faction, and so you do dishonor us"; to which familiar form of masculine arrogance the defendant answered with unfeminine directness, "I do acknowledge no such thing." Dudley, however was more skillful in his attack, and led her on to say that the basis of her authority to teach was "an immediate revelation from God"; whereupon he remarked "These disturbances that have come among the Germans have been all grounded upon revelations, and so they that have vented them have stirred up their hearers to take up arms against their prince and to cut the throats of one another, and these have been the fruits of them."

In the end her followers were disarmed and she was banished from the Colony; she was imprisoned for some time in the house of Mr. Weld in Roxbury, one of her bitterest foes, and then was thrust out of the borders, and wandered southward and westward until she and her family fell a prey to the Indians. It was a hard fate,—perhaps she was a martyr for freedom of conscience and of speech, but before we are led astray by our sympathy for her sufferings, let us consider what would have become of political freedom in those days when politics and religion were so badly mixed, if a person two centuries ahead of her age had been permitted to promulgate to the ignorant, doctrines which

they were not yet qualified to understand. The Puritan did not think

“He should have patronized with equal zeal  
Every adventurous and random rover,—  
Have freely shared his dear-bought common weal  
With every renegade that might come over,—  
Ready to grant each wanderer's appeal,  
Whether he hailed from Holland, Dublin, Dover.”

The work they had in hand required men of a different mettle,—the mighty destinies they were to accomplish and the temper of the world in their day allowed no time for nice adjustment of differing opinions. They had to found and to perpetuate an empire, and men who could have temporized with insubordination would have been too irresolute to found and too sterile to perpetuate.

After Mr. Hutchinson left Boston, the estate was sold in 1639 to his brother Richard, who was afterwards one of the richest citizens of London;—so rich that the loss of £60,000 by the great fire did not ruin him. He sold\* the old lot in March, 1657/8, to Mr. John “Evered alias Webb,” a prominent citizen† and large land owner in Boston, whose name was a survival of a form that had been common one hundred years earlier, but which before the middle of the seventeenth century

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\* Suffolk Deeds, III, 128.

† John Evered alias Webb (probably Webb originally), came from Marlboro', Wiltshire, in the “James” from Southampton, having embarked in April. He landed here 3 June, 1635, and lived later in Chelmsford and Dracut.

had become very unusual. He was a rich man, but the price he paid for his house and lot does not seem extravagant,—it was £75. He held it only three years and then sold it to Henry Shrimpton,\* a brazier, a man of wealth, and so honorable in his dealings that even the Indians trusted him. The story is told that when, in June, 1646, the Narragansetts were dunned by the English for a debt of 1300 fathoms of wampum, valued at £370, and had only £5 worth of wampum to pay it with, they brought their brass kettles, their only earthly possessions, to the white men as a contribution toward the balance. These being scornfully rejected by the hard hearted Saxons, behold poor “Lo” and his tribe filing down Washington Street, each with his kettle on his head, toward the shop, and standing by with grunts of acquiescence, while Mr. Shrimpton weighed these kettles and purchased them at his own price, and then leaving the purchase-money in his hands, taking no receipt therefor, that he might hold it until they were able to pay their debt in full! Has ever a barbarian put such trust in an Indian agent since? It may be with reference to this incident that John Dunton wrote† from Boston in March, 1686, “Mr. Samuel Shrimpton has a very Stately house there, with a Brass Kettle atop, to shew his Father was not ashamed of his Original.”

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\* Suffolk Deeds, III, 476.

† John Dunton's *Letters from New England*, Prince Society, 1867, p. 68.

Mr. Henry Shrimpton died in July, 1666, and devised\* to his "dafter Abigell" the old corner as his "Garden and garden howse & all the apurtnencies thereunto belonging and three hundred pounds to build a hows for heare and her hairees for euer." This Abigail married Zachariah Bourne, and on their death the property descended to their two daughters, Abigail and Elizabeth Bourne, who lived in England, and who in 1707 sold it to Mr. Thomas Creese (or Crease), an apothecary of Boston.

Four and one-half years later Boston was visited by one of a class of calamities which are too common in its history. Judge Sewall notes in his Diary, "About 7 or 8 aclock of the night between the 2<sup>d</sup> and 3<sup>d</sup> of October a Dreadfull Fire hapens in Boston; it broke out in a little House belonging to Capt. Ephraim Savage, by reason of the Drunkenness of — Moss: Old Meeting House and Town House burnt. Old Meeting House had stood near 70 years," and next day he writes, "The L<sup>t</sup>. Gov<sup>r</sup>. Taylor arrives. He saw the Fire 20 Leagues off." This was the great fire of 1711, which burned both sides of Cornhill from School Street to Dock Square,—the greater part of Pudding Lane between Water Street and Spring Lane, and both sides of parts of King and Queen Streets. The town house burned was on the site of the Old State House: from it some gentlemen rescued the Queen's picture. In the

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\* Suffolk Probate, 409.

attempt to save the bell of the old church, some sailors climbed into the steeple, where their escape was cut off by the fire,—they were seen trying to climb out, but too late, and they perished in the flames before the eyes of the townspeople.

That the moral lesson taught by this event might not be overlooked by his flock, Increase Mather preached a sermon entitled “Burnings Bewayled,” of the value of which you may judge from the following extract: “But has not God’s Holy Day been prophaned in New England? Has it not been so in Boston this last summer more than ever since there was a Christian here? Have not burdens been carried through the streets on the Sabbath day? Have not Bakers, Carpenters & other tradesmen been employed in servile work on the Sabbath day? When I saw this . . . my heart said Will not the Lord for this kindle a fire in Boston?”

This fire cleared the historic corner of every vestige of a building, and Mr. Creese at once erected the building which has been familiar from childhood to the oldest inhabitant, though roof and windows have been somewhat remodeled. Fifteen years later he sold the place to Peter Lucee and Nicholas Davis,\* and in the Davis family it remained until 1755, when it was bought as an investment by the trustees of the estate of Thomas Palmer, who had married a great-granddaughter of Mrs. Ann Hutchinson. From them it passed to Edward and Susanna Sohier and into the possession of Brimmer and Inches, who have owned it ever since.

It was in 1828 that the old corner first became known as a literary centre, when Messrs. Carter & Hendee opened their book store there, and since then it has been the home of the printed records of human thought, for Carter & Hendee were followed by Allen Ticknor, Ticknor & Fields, E. P. Dutton, A. Williams & Co., Cupples, Upham & Co., and Damrell & Upham. These are all known to most of you, and many of them are living, and as they are not public characters or relics of antiquity they are not fit subjects for my pen.

One there is, in this long line of noted book-sellers, who put himself before the public in another capacity. In 1830, Mr. Richard Sullivan wrote to a boy in Portsmouth that he had found a place for him according to his request, with Messrs. Carter & Hendee, "Excellent young men, and much respected in Boston. If you like the trade, and are pleased with the place, you can come as soon as your mother pleases." The boy came, and saw, and conquered the hearts of the book-men of the modern Athens. His name was James T. Fields, and when he was associated with Mr. William D. Ticknor, their store became the recognized rendezvous of literary Boston. The distinguished authors who frequented it felt a sincere regard for their publishers, and aspiring but unknown young writers met there that encouraging reception and judicious criticism which are the best stimulants for genius. From their press came in 1849 "The Boston Book," and in the same year Mr. Fields

wrote to Miss Mitford, "I am just now superintending the republication of the complete poems of Robert Browning, the first American reprint." Mr. E. P. Whipple says of Mr. Fields,\* "His place of business always seemed thronged with visitors. Some dropped in to have a chat with him, and they dropped in every day,—others had letters of introduction and were to be received with particular attention, others were merciless bores, who severely tested his patience and good nature." Among those he was glad to see, were Louis Agassiz, Benjamin Pierce, Charlotte Cushman, Charles Sumner, Hawthorne, Willis, Prescott, George Bancroft, Longfellow, George S. Hillard, Crawford the sculptor, Artemas Ward, Ole Bull, Fechter, Sothorn, and Dickens, Dr. Channing and the poet-autocrat.

Mr. George William Curtis writes of him, "The annals of publishing and the traditions of publishers in this country will always mention the little Corner Book Store in Boston as you turn out of Washington Street into School Street, and those who recall it in other days will always remember the curtained desk at which poet, philosopher, historian, divine, and the doubting, timid young author, were sure to see the bright face and to hear the hearty welcome of James T. Fields. What a crowded, busy shop it was, with the shelves full of books, and piles of books upon the counters and tables, and loiterers tasting them with their eyes, and turning

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\* Fields' Life, p. 53.

the glossy new pages,—loiterers at whom you looked curiously, suspecting them to be makers of books as well as readers. You knew that you might be seeing there in the flesh and in common clothes the famous men and women whose genius and skill made the old world a new world for every one upon their spell lay. . . . Not only the poet brought his poem there still glowing from his heart, but the lecturer came from the train with his freshest touches of local humor. It was the exchange of wit, the Rialto of current good things, the hub of the hub. . . . There was then in Boston a universal moral and intellectual fermentation, but at the Corner Book Store the distinctive voice was that of ‘pure literature,’ . . . .”

Mr. Fields was a bright spirit, very fond of humor, and his laborious hours at his desk were lightened not only by conversation with the polished scholars of the city, but by many amusing interviews with those whose native powers were untrained by art, such as the old farmer from the Cape who explained that he had been exploring his native region with a noted professor who was writing a book, and he “had come up to Boston to see that one pertikler thing was in that book,”—concluding his explanation with,—“Now I should like to finish Mr. Agashy’s article for him, for he is a real good, queer man.”

At the other extreme was Prof. George Ticknor, who was a frequent visitor at the Old Corner Book Store.



We can imagine the old gentleman walking from the beautiful spot where he had made his home, down Beacon and School Streets and in at the low side door, somewhat awing by his formal, old world manner, the group of talkers of a younger generation,—as if some colonial, Leverett or Saltonstall or Winthrop, had stepped in to say a word to Isaac Johnson, as he was passing by, and were shocked at the levity of the conversation he interrupted. “He has much,” writes Mr. Fields, “that is interesting to relate about the incidents of his life, and as the years increase, finds a greater pleasure than ever in recalling his memories of distinguished men, whose careers have been parallel to his own.” Here then were told some of those delightful reminiscences with which we are familiar in the fascinating volumes of the “Life of George Ticknor.” How cramped in that low room must have seemed even the anecdotes of the exalted personages who move so majestically across the stage of Mr. Ticknor’s diary! So Thomas Starr King loved, as he says “to enter the dear old sanctum on the corner, and pester the poet-bibliopole.” “I go,” he writes in 1860, “where there is no such compound as yourself. Fields there may be in California. Chinamen are there, and perhaps tea fields, but no James T. Fields alas!”

The loss that Boston sustained on the death of Mr. Fields is one that can never be made good. He had created for himself a unique place in the city and in the

nation, — for he was known throughout the United States. The times have so changed, that no one can hereafter hold quite the same relation to literature, both foreign and domestic, that he held so many years, and the Old Corner Book Store can perhaps never again be a national literary centre ; but he has left an enduring name and no one in the long line of owners and tenants of this valuable corner lot has done more to add to its historic interest. For it is the people who have occupied it who fix our attention more than those who have merely owned the land ; and we cast no cloud on the admirably clear title of its present owners, if we close our study of its history with the lines of Longfellow :

“ We have no title deeds to house or lands ;  
Owners and occupants of earlier dates  
From graves forgotten, stretch their dusty hands,  
And hold in mortmain still their old estates.”





SCOLLAY SQUARE, 1860, LOOKING EAST.

Showing building formerly the New England Museum on the left

THE NEW ENGLAND MUSEUM AND THE  
HOME OF ART IN BOSTON

BY

WALTER K. WATKINS





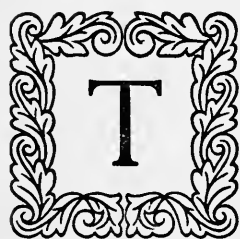
## THE NEW ENGLAND MUSEUM AND THE HOME OF ART IN BOSTON.

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A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY, COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
OLD STATE HOUSE, DECEMBER 19, 1911, BY

WALTER K. WATKINS.

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TO a citizen of the town of 1820 returning to the scenes of his former life via the East Boston Tunnel exit, or emerging by the opposite exit into Scollay Square, from the purgatory of a rush hour, it would be an unfamiliar locality. Seeking the north star to localize himself, a familiar structure greets him in the building between Brattle Street and Cornhill, facing Court Street. As it stands to-day so it stood nearly a century ago and so it may stand for centuries to come. It is true its headgear is slightly changed and its footwear is altered into a corner

grocery. A capacious pocket, a subway entrance, also appears in its outfit. Still it stands there more lasting than the eternal hills, for have its walls not witnessed the demolition of the three crests of Beacon Hill which gave to the town its first name of Trimountain. Daniel Maude standing in the doorway of his school, the first in the land, which was on the site of the Suffolk Savings Bank, saw a far different view when he gazed to the northward. In the distance across the water stood that most ancient fortified house built by Maverick in 1625, at Winnisimmet. Nearer were the straggling houses at the north end of the town, skirting the harbor front. In the foreground were a few houses and tan vats, as the area between Hanover, Court and Washington Streets was early claimed by the leather dressers.

On the path skirting the base of Cotton Hill were a few houses, less than a dozen, on the way between what is now Hanover and Washington Streets, the present Court Street. The house lots had a frontage of 75 or 100 feet and a depth of 150 to 200 feet. They were the residences of well-to-do tradesmen. One of these was Nathaniel Williams who was in Boston as early as 1639, and ten years later had sold his house, just west of the prison, to move to the other side of Prison Lane, on the site of the Museum building in which we are interested. He was newly married on his arrival, and his ten years of married life had been blessed with six



children. Mention in the early records as a laborer, shows that he contributed to the early growth of the town by his labor rather than by a money subscription. His trade was that of a glover, and many of his neighbors on the north were interested with kindred trades of leather dressers, tanners, breeches makers, etc. The locality furnished a water supply, from the numerous springs, to dress their skins.

Mr. Williams prospered and in 1655 purchased from Richard Peapes or Pepys the house and lot formerly owned by William Blackstone, just west of the Common. Pepys was the son of Richard Pepys, Chief Justice of Ireland, and cousin of Samuel Pepys the diarist. Williams paid several visits to England. He joined the "Ancients" in 1644 and was second sergeant in 1654. He was a selectman of the town from 1659 till his death, 23 April, 1661.

He was survived by his wife, Mary (who married (2) Peter Brackett), two sons, John and Nathaniel, and three daughters. The oldest daughter, Ruth, married Joseph Belnap and her father gave them part of his garden back of his house. Belnap hired from the town, on a long lease, a house in the open square opposite the Williams' house. This house in later years became one of the block known as Scollay's buildings. The alley leading to Belnap's garden became Belnap's Alley after 1661, and was widened into Brattle Street in the nineteenth century. Mary, a daughter of Ruth Belnap,

married Joseph Grafton of Salem, the third of that name.

Williams' shop was in the front of half the house and was well stocked. Calicoes, cambrics, mohair silk, scotch cloth, lockram, green say, yellow serge, blue linen and lawn, were piled on his shelves to the value of about £10,000. His house was valued at £300 with the land. The half he lived in had a hall, parlor, great and little chambers, garret chamber and cellar. Thomas Sanford, his son-in-law, lived in the other part. After Sanford's death his widow married Dr. John Clark the noted surgeon. The third daughter, Mary Williams, married John Vial, Jr.

The eldest son, Nathaniel Williams, heir to such a fine estate could wed a well dowered bride, and he did, when, at the age of 30, in 1674, he married Mary, the well-to-do widow of Jonathan Shrimpton, and daughter of Peter Oliver, an eminent merchant. Williams, previous to his marriage was living at Indian Bridge, Barbadoes. He joined the "Ancients" in 1667 and was fourth sergeant in 1676, ensign in 1684, and lieutenant in 1693. A commissary in King Philip's War in 1676; captain of a Boston company in the Suffolk regiment; he was lieutenant of the Fort and had Andros in his keeping when the governor was imprisoned. In 1695 he was captain of the Castle. A deacon of the Old South Church, many religious meetings were held in his house, as testified to by Judge Sewall in his diary.

He was a member of the first board of overseers of the poor in 1691, and a selectman in 1692/3.

Becoming a widower, he again espoused a widow in the person of Sarah, widow of Richard Crisp, a merchant from Jamaica, and the youngest daughter of Rev. John Wheelwright of Salisbury. This marriage was in 1700, at which time Captain Williams executed a deed of the house to his son Nathaniel, then 25, but the deed was not recorded till 1715, after the father's death.

Captain Williams occupied the west part of the house, three lower rooms, three Chambers and two garrets. In the east part of the house dwelt Colonel Wolfgang William Romer. He was born at the Hague in 1640 while his father was ambassador from the elector palatinate. His father, Matthias Romer of Dusseldorf, married in 1637, at Aix-la-Chapelle, Anna Duppengeizer. Their son had the elector as his godfather. Young Romer entered the service of the Prince of Orange as an engineer, went with him to England, and was made a colonel. As an engineer in Ireland he was employed on the fortifications at Cork, Longford and Thurles. In 1692 he was chief engineer in an artillery train fitted out at St. Helens for an expedition to France. In 1693 he was chief engineer of an ordnance train for an expedition to the Mediterranean under Lord Bellomont. In 1694 he reported on the defences of Guernsey in the Channel Islands and made a plan of Castle Cornet, preserved in the British Museum.

He was ordered to New York in 1697 at the request of Bellomont; there he made a plan of the Hudson River and surveyed the country, exploring the territory of the Five Nations. His map of this is in the British Museum. He reconstructed forts at Schenectady and Albany and surveyed the coast north of Boston to Pemquid. He arrived in Boston the last part of 1698 to examine the fortifications, and the Castle was reconstructed under his direction. A portion of the stone tablet reciting this is preserved by the Massachusetts Historical Society.\* He planned the fortifications while in the Williams house. There seems to have been friction between Romer and Captain Timothy Clarke of the Castle. Romer was complained of for his swearing at the workmen. When visiting the Castle with the Governor one June day in 1699, a gun fired at the request of Romer, burst and killed the under gunner, Nathaniel Holmes of Roxbury, and wounded others.

In October, 1701, a piece of plate to the value of £20 was voted him for his services, and one of the value of £10 to his son John, his assistant. He then

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\* It had been excavated in the first quarter of the last century in the rear of the house occupied by Romer. It was perhaps in the possession of Benjamin Pollard, sheriff and a military man. It was turned over to the Boston Athenaeum and found later by Mr. Folsom, the librarian, in the attic of their building on Pearl Street. It was exhibited at a meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 11 May, 1858. Later it was again unearthed in the basement of the Athenaeum on Beacon Street and given to the Mass. Hist. Soc. in 1879.

went to Albany and returned to Boston in the fall of 1702. Captain Clarke was dismissed by a resolve of the General Court and Romer attempted to complete the works in the following summer, but it dragged on a year longer, when in 1704, Romer was relieved and ordered back to England. The gratuity voted him was refused, but his son received £50. In October, 1705, the tablet previously referred to was placed on the fortification at the Castle. In 1708 he was employed at Block House Fort, Portsmouth, Eng., and at Harwich and other ports until his death, 15 March, 1713.

His son, John Lambertus Romer, who was with him in Boston, served as ensign in Rooke's regiment and in 1713 was lieutenant in the 4th Foot. In 1715 he was an engineer at Sheerness and in 1720 in North Britain, erecting barracks at Forts Augustus, William and George. He was a captain in 1739, and in 1745 under the Duke of Cumberland he was wounded at Culoden. He retired in 1751, and is buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster. A descendant, Colonel Robert William Romer, died in 1889.

After this digression we will return to the owners of the property,—the Williams family,—in the person of Nathaniel, son of Captain Nathaniel and his wife Mary Oliver. Born in Boston in 1675, a graduate of Harvard in 1693, in 1703 he became assistant to Ezekiel Cheever, the schoolmaster, and in 1708 removed into the little house in Schoolhouse Lane where Cheever

had lived. He taught in the Free Grammar School until 1722 and had among his scholars Benjamin Franklin. He had tried the ministry in his early days and had a sad experience in 1706, with the Rev. Benjamin Woodbridge of Medford, whose church was trying to unburden him of his position. The aged minister seems to have had the best of it in a physical struggle as to who would proclaim a fast from the pulpit of the Medford church. Occasionally Williams would pray at a muster on the training-field in Boston, and in 1727 we find him preaching a sermon in the Old South. A contemporary says of him "An agreeable mixture of majesty and sweetness, both voice and countenance." In 1723 he commenced the practice of medicine but still continued as master of the South Grammar School until 1734, when he was succeeded by John Lovell. Mr. Williams thereafter served on the school committee till his death, 10 January, 1737/8.

He had married about 1700, Anne, born 3 September, 1670, daughter of Dr. Samuel and Mercy (Tyng) Bradstreet, and a granddaughter of Governor Bradstreet. Dr. Bradstreet, a physician, had resided in the island of Jamaica. His daughter, Anne, was named after her grandmother, Anne (Dudley) Bradstreet, the earliest poetess of the country. By his wife, Anne, he had a son and two daughters. The youngest of these, Mary, born 20 January, 1707, married 30 July, 1730, John Smibert, a young Scotchman, and was dowered

with £400 and went to reside in the west half of the Williams' mansion. 3 March, 1736, his other daughter, Ann, married Dr. Belcher Noyes of Boston.

Mary, sister of Rev. Nathaniel Williams, married (1), 16 December, 1703, Hopestill Sale; he died in 1705, and she married (2), 15 October, 1708, William Lowder, a tailor. They had a son, Jonathan Lowder, born 26 October, 1713, who was a barber. In 1726, on the death of Sarah Crisp Williams, William and Mary Lowder conveyed their interest in half the house to Rev. Nathaniel Williams, and in 1734 Jonathan Lowder released his interest; at the same time Nathaniel Belnap, Williams' cousin, sold him a piece of land in Hillier's Alley, about 35 by 50 feet.

When Rev. Dr. Williams died, in 1738, he was buried in his tomb, No. 63, in the South or Granary Burying Ground. He left a good estate to his surviving heirs, his two daughters. The house and land were valued at £3000; his books were valued at £342; 182 ounces of plate at 25 shillings an ounce totalled £228; his cow valued at £8 was driven to the pasture on the Common by his negro man Richard valued at £100; shays and tackle valued at £25, served him to visit his patients and dispense his "apothecary drugs," of which he had a stock of £40 worth at his death. He left his house in equal parts to his two daughters, the line of division running through the house from front to rear. The Smiberts had the west half and to Ann Noyes was

left the east half. In 1743 Belcher and Ann Noyes conveyed their half to John Smibert.

“John, son of the late John Smibert in Middletown, apprenticed with George Clerk, litster, 20 July, 1664. John, son of the late William Smibert in Middletown, apprentice with Robert Gilmour, litster, 18 January, 1665.” It is uncertain which of these was the “John Smibert, litster, who married at South Leith, 5 April, 1678, Allison Bell.” John Smibert, litster, was buried 29, January, 1690, in Greyfriars graveyard, Edinburgh.

In 1684 there was born John Smibert, the son of the Edinburgh dyer or litster, who became the first Boston artist of note. As a youth he was apprenticed as a house painter and plasterer, but left his master and went to London. There he worked for carriage painters, decorating the coaches of that period, and later copied pictures. For a while he attended Sir James Thornhill's Academy in St. Martin's Lane. He returned to Edinburgh and then went to Italy, and at Florence, Rome, and Naples, copied the masters and painted portraits. He returned to England in 1720 and in London was a member of the Society Virtuosi of London.

Smibert came to America in 1728 with Dean, afterwards Bishop, Berkeley, and arrived in Newport, R. I., in January, 1729, and later came to Boston, where he met Mary Williams, whom he married 30 July, 1730. Their first child, Allison, named after Smibert's mother,



was born 14 May, 1731. There were also three sons: William, born in 1732; John, in 1733, and Nathaniel, in 1735. The following advertisement appeared in the *Boston Gazette* for 21 October, 1734:

JOHN SMIBERT, PAINTER,

Sells all sorts of Colours, dry or ground, with oyls, and Brushes, Fans of several sorts, the best Mezzotinto, Italian, French, Dutch and English Prints in Frames and Glasses or without, by Wholesale or Retail at Reasonable Rates, at his House in Queen Street, between the Town House and the Orange Tree, Boston.

His youngest son, Nathaniel, took up his father's profession after attending the Latin School, and gave promise of making a fine artist, but died at the early age of twenty-one. John Smibert, the elder, through his wife's connections in Boston, was able to obtain patrons among the first families of the town, especially among the descendants of the great-grandfather, Peter Oliver. Andrew Oliver, the stamp act officer, had him paint all the family portraits. The Lyndes also, connected with the Olivers, had their portraits painted by him.\* The Sewalls, Brinley, Otis, Savage, Greenleaf, Kilby, Hancock, Bulfinch, Chandler, Colman and others were his subjects. The well known life-size portrait of Peter Faneuil was painted by Smibert, and the plan

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\* Mr. A. T. Perkins states in the Proceedings of the Mass. Hist. Soc. (1878), that Smibert was introduced to Judge Lynde in England by his cousin the Earl of Bristol. The Lyndes were connected with the Digbys, the first Earls of Bristol, they became extinct in 1698 and the Harveys, the later Earls of Bristol, were no relations to the Lyndes.

of Faneuil Hall is said to have been his work. In 1746 he sold at his house in Queen Street a plan of Louisburg, engraved by Richard Gridley an artillery officer of Boston.

A contemporary of Smibert was Peter Pelham, who made engravings from Smibert's portraits of the ministers Caner, Colman, Cooper and Sewall and William Pepperrell. Pelham resided in different parts of the town; in 1738 on Summer Street, in 1747 he had a school on Queen Street, and died the same year as Smibert, 1751, in his house in Lindall's Row, near the Quaker Meeting House. Pelham married the widow Copley, and her son, John Singleton Copley, is said to have been a pupil of Smibert.

John Greenwood, a native of Boston, an artist of whom little is known, acted as appraiser of Smibert's estate. In his early days he had been apprenticed to Thomas Johnston, the engraver of several noted items in Boston's history. Johnston was a japanner by profession and employed Greenwood to paint coats of arms and similar work.

John Smibert died in 1751, in March, his wife surviving him. Among his effects were 35 portraits valued at £60 : 5 : 4; 41 history pieces and "pictures in that taste," £16; 13 "landskips," £2 : 13 : 2; 2 conversation pictures, £23 : 6 : 8; Bustoes and figures in Paris plaster, and models, £4 : 5 : 8; Library, £11 : 18 : 5; Prints and Books of prints, drawings, etc.; a prospect

glass and a magnifying glass, a silver hilted sword, "foyles" and flutes. His plate was 109 ounces to the value of £36; he owned colors and oils valued at £307 : 16 : 5; a horse, chaise and runners, £24 : 5 : 4, and a negro girl, Phillis, £26 : 13 : 4. Besides his half of his house he had purchased, he owned 14 acres in Roxbury and a house lot at the west end of Boston, valued at £10.

His son John died young, and Nathaniel at 21, in 1726; and on the death of the mother the house in Court Street became the property of the oldest son, William, who adopted the profession of his grandfather Williams, and became a physician and a graduate of Edinburgh University in 1762. He died just before the commencement of the war and left all his property to his cousin, John Moffatt, a painter, "for his affection shown me all my life."

An extract from a letter of Charles Wilson Peale, writing of his visit to Boston in 1765, is as follows :

"Becoming a little acquainted with the owner of the shop, he told me that a relation of his had been a painter, and he said he would give me a feast; leading me upstairs introduced me into a painter's room, where there were a number of pictures unfinished and some groups of figures, he had begun a piece, several of the heads painted, of ancient philosophers, these were the last works of Smybert. He had been in Italy and spent a fortune in travelling to gain knowledge in the art. It was at this shop I heard of Mr. Copley, and taking directions, I went and introduced myself to him, as a person just beginning to paint portraits,

he received me very politely. I found in his room a considerable number of portraits, many of them highly finished; he lent me a head done, representing by candle light, which I copied."

John Moffatt died in 1777, making Belcher Noyes his executor, and leaving the residue of his property to his brother, Thomas Moffatt, if he returned to the States within three years of John's death. If he did not return the property was to go to a neighbor of the Smiberts, in the house adjoining on the west, — the widow Surviah Wait.

Thomas Moffatt came to America with Smibert, and his portrait is shown in the Berkeley picture painted by Smibert. He was Comptroller of Customs at New London, and at the time of the Stamp Act troubles he was at Newport, R. I., where he was burnt in effigy with Judge Martin Howard. His house and goods were destroyed by the mob. The home government ordered the Governor and Assembly to pay him £1000. The Assembly voted him £150 but it was never paid. He fled to Boston and from thence to England where he received a pension of £200 per annum. He died of old age and a paralytic shock at Grosvenor Place, Pimlico. He was buried at St. George, Hanover Square, London. His epitaph there is as follows: "Here is laid Thomas Moffat, M. D., 21 March, 1787, who left his gratitude to his King and the British Nation, his prayers to Loyalists and pardon to the Rebels of America." As a loyalist absentee Thomas Moffatt shunned

the town of Boston, and the Queen Street house became the property of Surviah Wait.

Thomas Wait married in Boston, 16 November, 1769, Sevia Torrey. In 1747 he had purchased a small brick dwelling with a twenty foot frontage on Queen Street, bounded on the south by Belnap's Alley. He died in 1775, giving to the church a silver flagon, equal to one given by Hon. William Dummer, bequests to the poor of the First Church, his relatives in Plymouth, Mass., and the residue to his wife Surviah. She married in 1779, Cornelius Thayer, leather dresser, and a widower with several children; he died in 1790. Surviah Thayer died in 1795, and left the house she lived in on Belnap's Alley, to Sukey, daughter of Samuel and Rachel Thayer. The administrator of her estate sold the Smibert house to William Smith.

Let us revert to the occupants of the house during the Revolution. William Sheaffe of Boston, died in 1771, leaving a widow and several charming children. He had been a deputy collector of customs in Boston, but left his large family in poor circumstances. The widow took the Smibert house, as a tenant, and kept a boarding house. The eldest daughter, Susanna, captured Captain Ponsonby Molesworth, just landed with his regiment, as he marched past the house. Her sister, Ann, married John Erving. Margaret married John R. Livingston. Helen married James Lovell. Two other daughters were Sally and Mary. A son,

Roger Hale Sheaffe, received a commission in the British Army and became a baronet.

These daughters were an attraction no doubt to a young Yankee officer, John Trumbull, but there were also in the house other attractions,—the pictures painted by Smibert and Copley. Thus influenced he hired, in 1777/8, Smibert's studio, and while there formed a club which met, and over a cup of tea, discussed literature, art, politics and the war. Here he painted the portraits of Royal Tyler, Thomas Dawes and two of Mrs. Sheaffe's daughters; also Franklin with a fur cap, after a French print; Washington, from Peale's portrait and from memory; Hancock and others.

In the *Chronicle*, 28 April, 1785, "John M Furnass Begs leave to inform his Friends and the Public. That he has taken a large and commodious Chamber at Mrs. Sheaffe's (nearly opposite Mr. Carter's Writing-School) formerly improved by Mr. Smibert, and lately by Mr. King limners, where he executes Portrait-Painting in Oil and Water Colours, also Hair-Work, done in the neatest manner. As a native of Boston he hopes for as much encouragement as foreigners and invites them to call at his Painting Chamber."

Furnass was a nephew of Nathaniel Hurd, engraver, and engraved as well as painted. He died in Dedham on 22 June, 1804, aged 42. S. King was a teacher of Washington Allston at Newport, R. I., later.

During the last years of the 18th century the house was occupied by Samuel Minot, goldsmith, and Caleb Blanchard. Another occupant was a son of Thomas Johnston, an early engraver, already mentioned. John Johnston has some little reputation as a portrait painter, and several examples of his work still survive. Portraits of Gov. Increase Sumner, William Phillips and family, Gov. Samuel Adams and his wife, are among them. He was a member of the Ancients and a lieutenant of the company in 1790. A member of the Boston train of artillery before the Revolution; he was an officer in Gridley's and Crafts' artillery regiments later, was wounded, a prisoner at Long Island, and discharged for disability through wounds in October, 1777. He returned to Boston and opened a painter's shop\* on Court Street, near the head of Gore's Alley (Brattle Street).

Mr. Smith, the purchaser of the estate in 1795, was a merchant at 53 State Street, and resided in the Court Street house which in 1810 was numbered "22 north side of Court Street." In a few years (1813), the houses were renumbered and it became 74 and 75 Court Street. He was elected in town meeting in 1805 town treasurer, and served as such annually till 1813. In that year an act was passed that the town

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\* "Miniature Painting, Is performed at the room over Major Johnson's Painting Room, Court Street, where good likenesses, neatly painted may be had upon reasonable terms." *Columbian Centinel*, 17 January, 1795.

treasurer should be elected by a convention consisting of the selectmen, overseers of the poor and board of health. As a result Mr. Andrew Sigourney was elected in his place. From 1809 to 1813 Mr. Smith's office as treasurer of the town was in the Old State House. Smith became financially embarrassed and when he died in 1816 his estate was found to be insolvent. It still remains unsettled in the Suffolk Probate Court, the last account having been filed in 1905.

#### REMOVAL.

The subscribers, grateful to their Friends and the Public for the very liberal encouragement they have received, would inform them of their removal from No. 75 Court street to No. 3 Tremont Street\* in one of the ten feet Buildings lately erected at the foot of Pemberton's Hill and directly opposite the head of Hanover Street where they will receive goods for cleansing and coloring of every description, likewise single width cloths for Dressing all of which will be executed in the very best manner and with all possible dispatch, &c, &c.

Feb. 8, 1817

JOHN AND AARON HALL  
(silk dyers)

---

\* Tremont Street then began at Howard Street. 3 Tremont Street was at the west end of Scollay's Buildings which extended past the head of Hanover Street. The westerly end were small wooden shops owned by the town and had been recently rebuilt.

"At Turrell's I see something like taste & science, but a man impoverished by his genius and industry. He has a mean upper chamber in the wedging building between the Court and Tremont Streets. The access is difficult. The Chamber low, & arrangement impossible to display anything to meet the eye." (Bentley Diary, III-52.) This refers to Samuel Turrell a watchmaker, formerly on State Street, who opened



Among the improvements planned for the town, early in the 19th century, was a scheme to extend Tremont Street to Cornhill, now Washington Street. This necessitated the removal of the schoolhouse, which had stood for a century in what is now Scollay Square, and the purchase of houses and lands between Court Street and Market Square, now Faneuil Hall Square. This included the territory which takes in the present Cornhill and Brattle Streets with the land between.

An act was passed by the General Court, 15 June, 1815, creating the "New Cornhill Corporation." The first meeting was held at Concert Hall, Monday, 3 July, 1815. Among those prominent in the project were Uriah Cotting, David Greenough, John Bellows, David Sears, and Samuel Parkman. The Smibert estate was acquired. It came between the two streets and lost a few feet of its frontage of 80 feet. Two brick stores were built on the Cornhill corner, facing on Court Street with a frontage of 54 feet. On the Brattle Street corner was another smaller brick store of 22 feet front on Court Street and 32 feet on Brattle—with a privilege of a passage to the chambers of the brick store in the rear, which ran through from Cornhill to Brattle Street.

---

a museum in 1803 in the west end of the Scollay Buildings, over a shop elsewhere referred to in this paper. He continued till 1809, when he resumed business as a watchmaker at 23 Union Street. He died about 1820. For many years (1794-1807) he was cabinet-keeper of the Mass. Hist. Society. Many articles in his museum were the property of that society, and for not returning them he was expelled in 1811. He was a man of intelligence and a great lover of books.

These stores were conveyed by the Corporation to David Greenough; and he conveyed to David Sears the two stores on the Cornhill corner. In the rear was a store next to the corner, conveyed by the Corporation to Uriah Cotting.

In 1820 David Sears leased his two stores on the corner of Cornhill and Court Streets, to Benjamin Rich, merchant, for 497 years, at a yearly rent of 23 tons of first quality wheat or Indian corn, to be paid in four equal quantities, on the first of March, June, September and December, with no deduction for taxes, and the buildings to have every ten years a painting of three coats of paint. All brick and wood in case of a fire to be rebuilt with the same number of shops, and built on the same plan within six months. The same year the wheat payment was changed to 30 ounces, 18 penny-weight and 18 grains of pure gold bullion. In 1829 Rich assigned the lease to John Bellows, and coined gold was receivable instead of bullion. In the rear of the two stores was the brick store sold by the Corporation to Uriah Cotting, which he sold to Sears. In the deed to Greenough there was a right in a passage "through an entry stair & skuttle" to chambers in the Cotting building, which was later the store of Walker, the kitchen furnisher.

A tenant for the buildings was found in the person of "Daddy Greenwood" as he became to be familiarly called by the Boston public. 22 July, 1815, he adver-

tized in the *Columbian Centinel* the exhibition of the "Dying Hercules," a life-size painting, 8 by 6½ feet, by Samuel F. B. Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, exhibited in May, 1813, at the Royal Academy, London. It had previously been modeled in clay by Morse. It was exhibited "at Greenwood's Painting Room 1 Tremont Street next to the Loan Office between 8 and 5."

In the midst of the Revolutionary War there was born in Hubbardston, Mass., a son to Moses and Betsey (Dunlap) Greenwood. The date of his birth was 27 May, 1779, and he was named Ethan Allen Greenwood. His father, a farmer, had come from Holden to Hubbardston in 1770. The son worked on a farm till 19, and in 1798 entered the Academy at New Salem, and the next year attended Leicester Academy. He graduated from Dartmouth in 1806 and studied law for a while with Solomon Strong. In 1812 we find him in Boston, a director and clerk of the Linen Spinner Company, holding with Alexander Dustin a majority of the stock.

His first effort in portrait painting was on 16 October, 1801. In 1813 he was living at 24 Marlborough Street, now Washington Street. He took up portrait painting as a profession at about this time and his studio or painting room was at 1 Scollays Buildings, now Scollay Square. 1 January, 1817, he applied to the town to hire the upper part of the old State House, but the Selectmen would not lease it for less than

\$1200 per annum, which was beyond his means or inadequate to his needs.

The Columbian Museum, started on State Street in 1791, had experienced a varied existence in different locations. It was in 1817 carried on by William Massey Stroud Doyle. In 1812 the New York Museum was started in Boylston Hall over Boylston Market. It was run by Edward Savage, who had painted a portrait of Washington. These were all in the field when Greenwood hired the buildings on Court Street and opened the New England Museum on the morning of July 4, 1818. How well it was patronized we do not know. There were other attractions in Boston on that day. A neighbor, A. Guerin, at 11 Court Street, grateful to his customers for past favors, announced that he would contribute to the celebration by the ascent of two balloons from in front of his "French Hat Manufactory" at South Boston, between six and seven in the evening of July 4. At the Vauxhall or Washington Gardens, between St. Paul's Church and West Street, fireworks were given. At the Boston Circus just south of the Gardens, in Haymarket Place, Vilallave's company of ropewalkers, contortionists and acrobats performed. At 9 Union Street was the Kaleidoscope or Magic Tube.

The New England Museum must have been a success as it soon absorbed the New York Museum. 11 April, 1821, the Columbian Museum, which had been run by

John Mix on the east side of Olive Street and fronting Court Street, in New Haven, was sold at auction by the administrator of Mr. Mix's estate. It consisted of wax figures as large as life, paintings, beasts, birds, fishes, serpents and reptiles, Indian and Chinese curiosities and 20,000 different species of insects preserved and enclosed in glass cases. There were also three fine organs. In 1804 the Old Boston Museum on North Street had been established by Philip Woods. These came into the hands of Greenwood in 1822 and became part of the New England Museum. In 1825 the Columbian Museum was absorbed. The collections of the Linnean Society housed over the Boylston Market were also purchased, and the New England Museum and Gallery of Fine Arts was at its best. It consisted of eleven spacious halls and apartments in the buildings on Court Street over the store on Cornhill.

The entrance was at 76 Court Street. Stores occupied the lower floor, and the stairway led upstairs to a long lobby, thirty-six feet long, now a dining room. This held 40 cases of stuffed birds. In a middle chamber about 3000 reptiles preserved in spirits cheered the spirits of the visitors; in cases on the sides of the room were minerals. In a recess in a passage was a great organ, at the other end the pondrometer, for weighing; by sitting in a chair the arm of a lady would point to the weight. The lower hall, in the building running from Cornhill to Brattle Street, was 70 by 36 and 14

feet high. In the center was a stuffed elephant, Horatio, and the "Vampyre of the Ocean," a nondescript, weight 5 tons. The south side of the hall was covered with large historical paintings, portraits of distinguished individuals, and other pictures. On the north side were cases filled with wax figures, and over them a range of portraits. In front of the wax figures stood 29 small figures of the Incas of Peru and their wives. At the ends of the hall were various pictures, including a full length portrait of Emperor Alexander of Russia and his empress, painted in St. Petersburg. In this hall was also the "Musical Androides," mechanical panorama, musical clock, stone sarcophagus, curious mirrors, etc. In a Marine Room on this floor were a variety of fishes and monsters from the sea and curiosities. There was also in this room a camel, buffalo, moose, white bear and serpents, all stuffed. The Cosmorama Room had alcoves of cases containing Indian and Asiatic curiosities, also a Cosmorama exhibiting views of cities, Constantinople, etc. The insect and shell room contained 4000 insects in cases. On one side was a group of wax figures of Indian chiefs with their weapons and utensils. A gallery around this room had its front covered with portraits and pictures.

The Upper Hall was the size of the lower. On its north side for the whole length were cases of birds. On the south side were quadrupeds and birds. In the center of the hall were cases of minerals, a marble statue

of Venus by Canova, and various other full length statues. A row of portraits went quite round the room. At the east was a stage. A great Asiatic lion was shown in front. "A Grand Military Androides" performed in this hall. Side rooms were all filled with interesting articles. In an upper room were wax figures, two sides of the room having historical groups of wax figures. There was also more cases of birds and curiosities, among them a mermaid. A monkey room had two ourang-outangs, Asia bear, opossum, a collection of birds from France, wild ducks, etc. In the centre of the room was a great leviathan turtle weighing eight hundred weight. The Shakespeare room contained a number of elegant prints in frames of Shakespeare subjects, and many fine historical prints. And last and not the least in size was the large painting of the "Roman Daughter in Prison," by Rembrandt Peale, which was a prominent feature in the entrance hall of the Boston Museum of later days.

About two o'clock in the afternoon of 14 February, 1832, smoke was seen to be issuing from the chambers occupied by the New England Museum. The fire department assembled and extinguished the fire which burnt the rafters to a coal and the fire was confined to the attic, but water through the ceilings damaged all the apartments. The fire was caused by a flaw in the chimney. A few years later Mr. Greenwood sustained losses, and in 1839 his assignees conveyed the collec-

tions to Moses Kimball and the Lowell, Mass., Museum, the collection being broken up in the spring of 1840.

Mr. Greenwood, in 1830, had taken a farm and hotel at Hubbardston, Mass. He represented the town at the General Court in 1833/4. In 1853, at the age of 74, he took a journey to Pennsylvania, and then to St. Louis, down the Mississippi to New Orleans, to Mexico, Tampico, and back home by the Atlantic coast. He died at Hubbardston, 2 May, 1855. It is interesting to note that he kept a diary from 1798 to 1855.

After the New England Museum ceased, Jonathan Harrington, whose exhibitions as a prestidigitator amused for years the Boston youth, had a museum in the Court Street buildings for two years. It was brought from the American Museum in Philadelphia. During the thirties (1832/3), Madame Duschane had a museum opposite the head of Hanover Street, and in 1834 opposite the head of Franklin Street, on Washington Street. There was shown a model West Indies sugar plantation, which was sold at auction at the end of the season.

In 1839 Daguerre introduced his process to the world. It was not till 1841 that the process was attempted in Boston. Among the half dozen who made daguerreotype miniatures was Ezra B. Chase, who for two or three years had a studio in the Court Street museum building. In 1846 John Plumbe, Jr., had a daguerreotype studio in the building. After the halls



were vacated by Harrington's Museum they were used as Washingtonian Hall by the Washingtonian Society and a military company from 1842 to 1846.

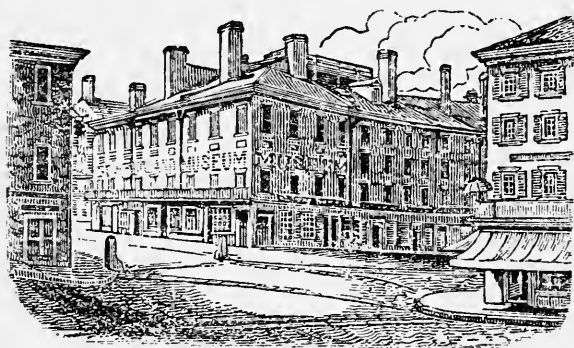
In 1846 a theatre was opened, called the Olympic, in these chambers above Waterman's tinshop, 83 and 85 Cornhill. In 1838 David Sears had leased for 100 years this building to Nathaniel Waterman. It was used by Waterman in the store and basement while the floors above were occupied by the New England Museum's upper and lower halls. The lease also gave a right of passage from Court Street through entry and staircase into chambers in the building leased. The rental was 51 ounces, 11 pennyweights and 6 grains of pure gold or coin. Afterward the lease was acquired by Walker the successor of Waterman.

In the spring of 1847 John Brougham and W. H. Bland opened a theatre called the Adelphia, over Waterman's. Mr. and Mrs. Brougham, Mr. and Mrs. Bland, Miss Wagstaff, Mrs. A. W. Benson, Mrs. W. H. Smith were in the company. The dress circle was 50 cents, upper circle 25, parquette 25, and private boxes \$1. Burlesques were the features. On 17 January, 1848, was to be produced as a new vaudeville "Box and Cox." Two weeks later a benefit was advertized at the Federal Street Theatre to John Brougham, late of the Adelphi, and Cornhill knew the Adelphia no longer.

Sixty-five years ago at 71 in the block was the book store of James Fisher, also a dealer in pictures and

prints. In 1821, at the sign of the Umbrella and Drum, 75 Court Street, I. E. Glover sold musical instruments of all kinds, from London. In 1850 Charles C. Clapp & Co., musical instruments, located at 69, the corner of Cornhill.

A visit to the Court Street building in 1911 still suggested its former uses. The chambers over Mr. Walker's store disclosed the museum and theatre areas of the last century filled with bins for the storage of kitchen furniture. The walls showed some trace of its former use and the connecting door into the Court Street property still existed. The wax figure room in the attic is crossed with iron braces to support the walls, and the mansard roof of later construction.



# ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS

SELECTED FROM THE

COLLECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY





## ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS

---

To the Trustees of the Franklin Donation in the  
Town of Boston.

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THE subscriber, under the age of twenty-five years,  
being a married man, pursuing the business of a  
Silver Smith and living in Marlboro' Street, within the said  
town of Boston, hereby requests the loan of 200 dollars  
from the above mentioned fund. He hereby declares, that  
he served an apprenticeship for  $5\frac{1}{2}$  years to the business of  
a Silver Smith with Jefse Churchill in the said town: and  
he offers as sureties for the repayment of the above sum,  
David Stanwood, Merchant, living in Broad Street, and Mr.  
John Lilley, Turner, living in Hawkins Street, and both cit-  
izens of the said town.

*Signed,* PHILEMON STACY

Boston, April 30 1819

---

WE the subscribers hereby certify, that we know Phile-  
mon Stacey who has signed the above application; that he

is a person of a good moral character ; and that we are willing to become his sureties for the above sum.

*Signed,*

DAVID STANWOOD

Boston

18

JOHN LILLEY

Approved

TURNER PHILLIPS

May 12, 1819

Chairman of Selectmen

**KNOW All Men by these Presents, That**  
we, Philemon Stacy Silversmith David Stanwood Merchant  
and John Lilley Turner

all of Boston in the county of Suffolk, are holden, and stand firmly bound and obliged to the Inhabitants of the town of Boston, in the county of Suffolk, in the full sum of *Four Hundred Spanish milled Dollars*, to be paid to the said Inhabitants. To the which payment, well and truly to be made, we bind ourselves, our heirs, executors, and administrators, jointly and severally, firmly by these presents. Sealed with our seals; dated this thirteenth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nineteen

WHEREAS the late Dr. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, in and by his last will, did bequeath to the Inhabitants of the said town of Boston, *One Thousand Pounds Sterling*, to be loaned under the management and direction of the Selectmen of the said town, united with the Ministers of the oldest Episcopalian, Congregational, and Presbyterian churches in the said town, to certain persons, on certain terms in the said will described and prescribed : And whereas the said Philemon

hath applied for and obtained a loan of *Two Hundred Spanish milled Dollars*.

Now the condition of the before written obligation is such,

That if the above bounden Philemon David & John their heirs, executors, or administrators, shall well and truly pay, or cause to be paid to the said Selectmen and Ministers, on or before the thirteenth day of May which will be in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty *Twenty Spanish milled Dollars*, being one tenth part of the principal sum loaned, together with the interest on the said principal sum, at and after the rate of five per cent. by the year; and so annually, on every succeeding thirteenth day of May shall pay one other tenth part of the said principal sum, with the whole interest due till the thirteenth day of May which will be in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty nine and shall then well and truly pay, or cause to be paid, to the said Selectmen and Ministers, as aforesaid, the whole that shall then remain due, both principal and interest, then the before written obligation to be void; otherwise to remain in full force and virtue.

*Signed, sealed, and delivered,*  
*in presence of*

Sewell Phelps  
Lemuel Stanwood

JOHN LILLEY\*



DAVID STANWOOD\*



PHILEMON STACY\*



Witnefs to P Stacey . W<sup>m</sup> Minot

---

\* Canceled by line drawn through name.

May 20, 1820	Rec <sup>d</sup> . Thirty Dollars*
Dec 13, 1821	Rec <sup>d</sup> Thirty Dollars.
June 7, 1823	Rec <sup>d</sup> fifty six Dollars $\frac{94}{100}$ of Mefs. Lilley & Stanwood
Feb. 10, 1825	Rec <sup>d</sup> twenty scale Dollars $\frac{17}{100}$ as above
Dec 27, 1826	Received fifty two Dollars $\frac{28}{100}$ as above
July 18, 1827	Rec <sup>d</sup> . of Mr. Lilley twenty three Dollars $\frac{11}{100}$ full to May 13 1827
Oct 29, 1828	Rec <sup>d</sup> twenty two Dollars $\frac{63}{100}$ as above to May 1828.
Oct 15, 1829	Recd. of Mr. Lillie twenty one Dollars $\frac{53}{100}$ of Mr Lillie in full of this Bond

---

The fund for the benefit of young married mechanics is founded upon a codicil to the will, dated 23 June, 1789, of Benjamin Franklin. After one hundred years the Treasurer of the Fund paid to the City Treasurer the sum of \$329,300.48 to be invested in the purchase of land and erection thereon of the Franklin Trades School.

Philemon Stacy was born in Gloucester, 1 March, 1798, the son of Philemon (born 1772) and Polly (Bray) Stacy. His father, a cooper on South Bennett Street, died in 1813. The son was apprenticed to Jesse Churchill, silversmith, 88 Newbury Street (site of the Globe

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\* Manuscript endorsements at foot of bond.



Theatre). In 1820 young Stacy had a shop in the rear of 26 Marlboro (Washington) Street. He died 13 July, 1829, and at that time was in business as a silversmith at 23 Brattle Street.

---

I confess I have not studied the Point Eno'. Either to Answer your Reasons, nor yet to Be of opinion Either way, and therefore I must Beg more time. We have now at Spithead a fleet of near four score men of war so that we Expect to Be Masters of the Sea this Year; We are likewise fitting out 20 men of War for the West Indies to secure ourselves there and in case of a War to offend. We have settled the succession of the Crown of England in the Duke of Hannover. There is a Bill brought in to Prevent the Translation of Bishops from one See to another. But we Despair of it's Passing. Sir My Father is now in Town and directs me to give you his Best service. he grows now so Impatient of the circumstances of his family that he is Resolved Either to Return himself or fend me, Before Winter. If it fall to my share I Pray God to Restore me to my Dear Countrey and friends in Peace and Safety for With them I have always desired to live and die I shall only Be forry that I am not so fitted to serve them as I would and Indeed ought to Be. Sir I am sure you must Be Doubly weary of my long scrawls first because of their orthography for I doubt you can't Read them, But principally because there is nothing in them worth reading and therefore I'll hold you no longer and add no more But Onely Recom-

mend myself to your most particular Affection and Respects  
for I am Hono<sup>r</sup>ble. Sir

Your most affectionate Humble  
servant      PAUL DUDLEY.

Our House was last Mich. Term pleased to Honor me  
with with a Barr Goun.

Sir, I had almost forgot to wish you and your Daughter Joy.

My humble service to Mr Torrey.

Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Bridge Water lately dead.

Kidd Triall comes on about a fortnight hence. tis thought  
By some that If My L<sup>d</sup> Bellom<sup>t</sup> had n't Died he would have  
Been sent for over upon that Affair, for that Kidd told the  
House of Commons that L<sup>d</sup>. B. procured him his Commis-  
sion and was the great Instrument of his going.

Sir You can't But know that the Elector of Brandeburgh  
is lately with the Emperor's consent made King  
of Prussia.

and the Elector of Bavaria turned out of his  
Govern<sup>mt</sup>. of the Spanish Netherlands and  
Returned to his own Countrey.

To the Honorable Sam<sup>l</sup> Sewall Esquire, at Boston, New  
England.

[Endorsed by Sewall, "Mr. Paul Dudley May 13 1701"]

The following letter from Lord Bellomont is in reply  
to one written by Samuel Sewall, which is printed in  
his letterbook published in the Massachusetts Histor-

ical Society Collections, 6th series, Vol. I, p. 240. The "Mr. Holman" referred to was the John Holman of Dorchester, born 23 February, 1638/9. Lord Bello-mont died in New York, 5 March, 1701.

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Albany the 14<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1700

Sir

before I receiv'd the favour of your letter of the 5<sup>th</sup> inst. I Inquir'd after M<sup>r</sup> Holman, calling to mind the request you formerly made me on his account. 'Tis in vain to promise you preferment for him, because that these companies being ill paid, or rather not paid at all, the officers as well as souldiers are destitute and in a miserable condition, therefore I conclude the kindest course I can take is to send M<sup>r</sup>. Holman to Boston to his friends, w<sup>ch</sup> I will do by Capt Crow.

You may depend on it, I will Indeavour w<sup>th</sup> all the power and Interest I have to obtain the Colledge Charter w<sup>th</sup> the very same changes and under the same restrictions and limitations agreed on by the Gen<sup>l</sup> Affembly only I confesse I have been almost under the Temptation of recommending M<sup>r</sup> Brattle the Minister of Cambridge and M<sup>r</sup> Pemberton (both men of unspotted lives and good scholars) to be made fellows in the room of two others that Stand in the list: and that might I conceive those two Gentlemen were left out by M<sup>r</sup> Mathers means, and to gratifie a personall prejudice he has against 'em. To be short to preach up moderation, and not to practice it one's selfe is not to do the part of a good Christian. The last text I heard young M<sup>r</sup> Mather preach

on was that of St Paul Let your moderation be known unto all men.

Let me know your free sentiments in this matter, whether it be best to humour Mr Mather's selfishneffe and pedantick pride, or to do right to the vertue learning and merit of Mr Brattle and Mr Pemberton. I have a great opinion of your moderation and vertue, and your Judgment in this matter will weigh much w<sup>th</sup>

Your affectionate humble serv<sup>t</sup>.

BELLOMONT

Capt. Sewall

Recd. Aug<sup>t</sup>. 26, 1700\*

Answerd Sept<sup>r</sup>. 2, 1700.\*

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\* Notations in the handwriting of Samuel Sewall.



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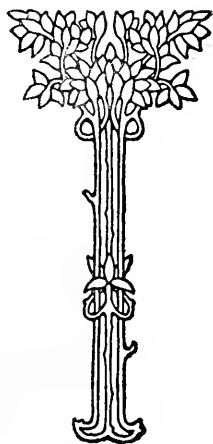
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